Introduction to the HMDT Romani Porrajmos learning resource, by Dr Thomas A Acton, Professor Emeritus of Romani Studies

Not only the re-telling of the Romani Holocaust, whether one uses the term *Samudaripen* or *Porrajmos* to describe it, but the whole of the understanding of the history of Gypsy, Roma, Traveller peoples has been changed by the emergence of professional Romani and Traveller historians, social scientists, political scientists, artists, designers, and linguistic scholars. But why? And how?

It is not because any community's members are intrinsically 'better' at telling their own story (although this is often implicitly, and sometimes explicitly stated). If that were so, we would not see the current situation in the world where every nation-state's government promotes its own national[ised] history, with its own 'glorious' victories and defeats, its own 'God-given' right or 'manifest destiny' to the territories it occupies (or influences through covert operations and surrogate leaders), its own traditions and culture that it suggests is markedly distinct from, and better than all others, especially those territorially closest. As we see in war time, religious leaders of every faith and denomination bless the tanks and missiles of their country's 'just cause'; for some politicians, all history is a kind of revision of the last war, or rehearsal for the next.

Romani and Traveller communities are not exempt from this kind of self-glorification. Even when marginalised and persecuted, they can revel in their resilience. We all tell our children stories contrasting brave, wild foxes with slavish, docile dogs; and of hares who can fend for themselves, while rabbits have to knuckle under to the rules of their warren. Romani advocates may defend themselves to *gorgio* or *gadjé* (non-Romani people) by asserting that at least they do not wage war (which is not true, there have been Romani and Traveller soldiers in many wars, at many times in the past). They may internalise racist stereotypes by saying that even if they steal a little more than others (which isn't true, based on reliable police statistics), they don't commit violent crimes (which, alas, isn't true either). They say they have never been elected as presidents of any country (actually, there have been leaders of Romani heritage in the USA, and in Brazil, for example). They may say that they respect the elders of their communities, and always cherish their children; but any Romani or Traveller pastor, priest, or social services professional can tell you (without breaking professional confidences that they can keep just like any *gorgio* professional), that their own people can get themselves into as much trouble, and sometimes behave as badly, as people from other communities, however good their family background.

Some historians do betray the search for truth by colluding with the kind of politics that says, 'We're the best – I wouldn't give tuppence for any of the rest', but scholarly, dedicated historians try to get beyond the comforting 'tales of past glory' to find out what actually happened, an account that anybody from any community can find believable, once it is properly explained. How do they do this? Only by hard work. They are trained to read a wide variety of classical (Latin and Greek), and modern languages, to restore the parchments and papyri (ancient scrolls made from reeds) of past ages, and to catalogue and analyse the documents left by rulers, generals, and administrators, from the Egyptian pharaohs, and Roman emperors, to Fascist dictators. They have to study biology, geology, archaeology, and technology of the past, to read the crumbling bricks of buildings long since collapsed (or destroyed by earthquakes) and discern the foodstuffs and eaten crops, eaten long-ago, from landscapes that have been farmed for thousands of years. They examine the catacombs of Ancient Rome, the grave pits of London's plague victims, and the crematoria of the German and Polish concentration camps, to throw light on who died, how, and why, in those terrible events and places.

And this hard work is collective and co-operative. No-one can learn all the languages, or all the scientific skills needed to read the record of things and places in the past. Every country and community on earth has something to contribute. Sometimes people who have the knowledge of local agriculture, architecture, and culture are still living in an oral tradition, not reliant upon the written word (such as the poets and singers of *epics* amongst the peoples of the Balkans, Anatolia, or the Middle East and North Africa). Part of the training of professional historians in many cultures is to work with those from other cultures to appreciate each other, and to reach as near to a common understanding as they can. And the first and most important tool for this, is to ask questions.

For professional historians are not just members of an *intelligentsia* (the intellectuals in any society that make up a distinct group). They are also ordinary human beings with their own personal stories of their past, their need to make sense of their families, and the environments they grew-up in. And from their own backgrounds they bring their own questions. Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller members of the team of historians, artists, designers, and social scientists, who put this learning resource on the Romani Holocaust together, for young people in schools and colleges in Wales, themselves had parents, grandparents, uncles, and aunts, some of whom were killed in concentration camps, or died on the way to them, or were shot on the roads of invaded countries by *Nazi Waffen-SS* death squads, as well as those who fought in the resistance movements against them, or the armies of liberation that finally defeated them. And their questions are not always, 'How did this happen *to them*?', but 'How did this happen to *people like me*, people in my family? To *us*?'. Stereotypes and generalisations about victims just won't cut the mustard. So, Romani and Traveller scholars, researchers and historians make a difference because they are asking new questions stemming from their own, and their families' experiences, that others have not asked, and the answers have to make sense in terms of human beings like them, and not ethnic or racial stereotypes. They ask questions from their own point of view, their *standpoints.*

The period of the Second World War, which lasted from around 1936 with the occupation of Austria by the Nazis (the *Anschluss* or 'unification' as it was called by Hitler), to around 1949 (when different conflicts that had emerged during the Second World War finally halted, such as the Greek Civil War, 1946 to 1949), led to anguished reassessment of what human beings are actually like. It shook up all the old certainties about the social order. Persons who had rarely been able to become historians or social scientists before, such as women, people from nations or communities who had been colonised or conquered, or had their ancestors enslaved and had been marginalised as a result, such people asked new questions, often perceived to be rebellious by those who had been the colonisers and conquerors. For the hundred years before World War II, such rebellious questions had mainly been asked by those resisting colonisation (such as Nana Yaa Asantawë [1840 to 1921], Queen Mother and Regent of the Ashanti confederacy in Western Africa that fought the British Empire, 1896 to 1900), the trade unions, labour parties, and political movements guided by the aspirations of European working-class men. Now a host of other *standpoints,* or perspectives, joined the conversation, their questions bouncing off one another, sometimes reinforcing each other, sometimes pointing to new conflicts of interest. Following the Black feminist Kimberlé Crenshaw, social scientists now call this complicated inter-weaving over time of various differences in issues about power, wealth, gender, culture, and opinion *intersectionality.*

Romani and Traveller historians make a difference, not because, as Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller people they have a special, *innate* (known only to them) knowledge, but because they have asked new questions, which everybody has to think about. Sometimes Romani politicians, like *gadjé* politicians say, 'We need our own history!', but that is just setting themselves up to go with comforting lies and half-truths. No-one actually has a history of their own, because *all our histories* are tangled-up together, inter-woven and intersectional. Pretending to have a separate history of your own is like saying to the rest of the world, 'We won't interfere with all the nonsense you feed your children, provided you don't interfere with the stories we tell ours.' Sometimes this attitude masquerades and hides behind the idea of the advocacy of 'mutual respect'; a moment's reflection will tell us it is anything but the case. Making sense of what looks like other people's nonsense is one of the most important tasks that historians and philosophers undertake.

Figure 1: Bryncrug Gypsies at the Dolgellau Folk Festival, 3 July 1958

To gain respect for our own, new historical Romani *narratives* (the connected events that we link to create a comprehensible story through time), we have to explain to others why they are not nonsense. We have to persuade each other to have a go at answering each other's questions, and also at questioning the questions themselves, realising how questions from particular perspectives (such as from women, members of minority ethnic communities, LGBTQ+ communities, and communities of people with differing abilities and additional needs), can shape answers, and that no generation reaches an assured final answer, even though some answers persist for millennia. Scholars call this questioning method the critical approach, the kind of method that the Ancient Greek philosopher, Socrates, adopted in 4th century Athens, and called thereafter the *Socratic* method.

Rewriting Romani and Traveller histories (and her-stories) successfully means persuading *gorgios* to rewrite non-Romani history and *her-story*. It will be a bigger job than we once thought. The Holocaust, the *Shoah* (meaning, 'catastrophe' in Hebrew) and *Porrajmos* (meaning, 'devouring' in Romani), is perhaps the most history-changing part of the whole Second World War. Unlike almost all previous genocides, those of the Jews, and the Sinti and Roma were stopped by the complete military defeat of the genocidal states, Germany and its fascist allies (including Japan). So, differing from the genocides of previous centuries carried out by American, British, Belgian, Dutch, French, Habsburg, Japanese or Ottoman Empires, which were partly defended, and partly covered up by their governments (or governments of successor states) for decades, sometimes centuries, the inner workings and sheer horror of the Jewish and Roma Holocausts became world-wide public knowledge almost immediately after 1945, as photographs, documents, and even films emerged in the world's press and cinema.

Figure 2: Gypsies (peg makers) camping near Swansea, 1st July 1953

[1] Gutter, P. (2022), "First Person: Holocaust survivor: 'Hate is vicious'", UN News, (29th January), https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/01/1110812
[2] Maximoff, Matéo (1946), "Germany and the Gypsies: From the Gypsies' Point of View", *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, vol.4

Although we may trace the beginnings of contemporary anti-racist theory to African American historians, such as W. E. B. Dubois in the early 1900's, it was only the impact of the Jewish (and latterly, Roma) Holocaust after 1945, that de-throned scientific racism. This made *anti-racism* a guiding light for de-colonisation movements and the end of the old empires during the second half of the 20th century. But for many of the actual survivors of the concentration camps, the last thing they wanted after the war to was remember and re-live the horror that they had escaped, but that so many of their families, friends, and communities did not. Why re-visit such atrocities that were obvious to all? As Pinchas Gutter, a survivor of six concentration camps, has said, "For the next ten years I never, ever thought about the Holocaust. My brain did something that made me not think about anything. I didn't think about my family. I lived in the moment."[1]

It was some twenty years before the stories of Jewish survivors began to be published in any numbers, and nearer to thirty-five before those of Roma and Sinti became common, although the great Rom writer Matéo Maximoff first denounced the Holocaust in 1946.[2] Having read writers like Alexandre Dumas and W. E. B. Dubois, he was later to meld together his own experience in a Vichy (the French wartime fascist government in the region of France not occupied by the Nazis) concentration camp, his family's memories of slavery in Rumania, and his reading about the history of that slavery, into his greatest novel *Le Prix de la Liberté* ('The Price of Freedom', 1955). Alas, at the time, it made only the same marginal impact on dominant academic thinking that W. E. B. Dubois' work had had some forty-two years earlier.

What perhaps prompted the outpouring of Jewish Holocaust memories from the 1960's was the emergence of 'Holocaust deniers' (such as historian, David Irving), a new generation of fascists and anti-Semites, aided by some bitter survivors of defeat, who claimed that the story of the concentration camps was a hoax. It became very important for those who were there to set down on paper what they had seen, for their own children and grandchildren. And for the now elderly Roma and Sinti survivors, this need to give their testimony was heightened by the fact that some Jewish Holocaust, or *Shoah* memorialists and even organisations joined in downplaying the genocide of Romani people. Rabbi Seymour Siegel, Executive Director of the American Holocaust Memorial Council, reacted to a campaign that Roma should be appointed to the Council, alongside its Jewish, Armenian, Polish and Black members, by saying, 'They have some cockamamie idea, which I would not support, of asking certain members of the council to leave. Or else getting legislation passed to add more members.'

More scholarly Jewish historians, however, did a great deal to get the brutal facts first published by Maximoff, into the general discourse. Donald Kenrick who, with Grattan Puxon, more or less founded the academic study of the Romani Holocaust (with a report to the First World Romani Congress in April 1971), was a Jew whose own relations suffered in the Jewish Holocaust. One of their staunchest supporters was the Israeli historian, Miriam Novitch, founder and curator of Kibbutz Lohamei ha-Getta'ot Holocaust Museum, the first such in the state of Israel. Not until Dr Ian Hancock's 1987 book, *The Pariah Syndrome*, do we find a Romani professor putting the Sinti and Roma *Porrajmos* into a general academic analysis of the persecution of Roma over the centuries.

And of course, in Germany itself, the revulsion and horror most of the younger generation felt towards those who had committed Nazi atrocities, was as great as in other European counties. The Romani Holocaust recognition was spearheaded by Sinti and Roma survivors and their children, especially Romani Rose, leader of the German Central Council of the Sinti and Roma, activist and advocate of Romani politics, which attracted many German scholarly collaborators. In fact, it is difficult to find any parallel in history to the extent to which post-war German generations have tried to acknowledge, repent of, atone for, and make reparations for the crimes of their grandparents and great-grandparents, and the Nazi racial state. Although the acknowledgement of the duty of collective reparations to Sinti and Roma came many years later than that to Jews, and only after the historical scholarship noted above demonstrated the basis for it, by the early 21st century it was well established.

One consequence of this German readiness to examine and learn from the past, however, was that after the war, the states that allied to it (sometimes run by collaborators installed by the Nazis, but often run by local fascists or right-wing nationalists), could claim that everything was the fault of the Nazis, and that the people who ran those states were themselves victims of the Nazis, who had no choice but to do what they did (as in Hungary during recent times, for instance). In Western Europe over the decades, collaborators concealing their own guilt have been more likely to be exposed. In southeastern Europe, however, many of the lower-level agents of fascist regimes switched their allegiance to the incoming Communist and Soviet-allied governments in the late 1940's, which means the facts in the case of southeastern Europe are less assured and more likely to have been obscured by officials who wish to hide their own complicity.

Essex, February 2023

“For the next ten years I never, ever thought about the Holocaust. My brain did something that made me not think about anything. I didn’t think about my family. I lived in the moment.”

1783

Heinrich Moritz Gottleib Grellmann publishes, Die Zigeuner. *Ein historischer Versuch über die Lebensart und Verfassung, Sitten und Schicksale dieses Volks in Europa, nebst ihrem Ursprunge*, ('The Gypsies. A[n] historical essay on the way of life and constitution, customs, and destinies of this people in Europe, together with their origin'), Leipzig

1787

Jacob Schäffer compiles the *Sulzer Zigeunerlist* (The Sulzer Gypsylist)

1793

Pastor Martin Zippel compares *Zigeuner* ('Gypsies') to "parasites" and "vermin"

1830

Local authorities in Nordhausen, Germany, remove Roma and Sinti children from their families, for fostering and eventual adoption by 'good' German families

1835

Theodor Tetzner writes of 'Gypsies' as "excrement"

1850

Robert Knox publishes, *Races of Men*, repeating Tetzner's statement

1855–1864

Roma slavery in Moldavia, Wallachia, and across the Rumanian lands is abolished in a series of acts

1863

Richard Leibich publishes a treatise, *The Gypsies in their Essentials and Language*, using the phrase, "life unworthy of life" (*Lebensunwertesleben*) and describing 'Gypsies' as inherently criminal

1869

Richard Kulemann repeats this phrase in relation to *Zigeuner* ('Gypsies')

1871

Charles Darwin contrasts the behaviour of Jews and Gypsies with "the culturally advanced, Nordic Aryan race"

1876

Cesare Lombroso's *Criminal Man*, describes the entire 'Gypsy' population as "a race of criminals"

1879

Roma in Serbia are forcibly settled and banned from movement around Serbia

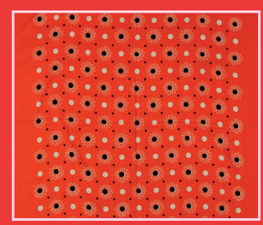
1886

Roma in Bulgaria are "forbidden" from pursuing a "wandering" lifestyle

Von Bismarck, German Chancellor, recommends the *"expulsion of all foreign 'Gypsies'"* from the German lands

1890

A conference organised by German local and regional authorities, is held to examine the problem of the "Gypsy nuisance" and the "Gypsy scum", in Swabia



1899

The German Police Gypsy Information Service is established in Munich, Bavaria, by criminologist, Alfred Dillmann, later renamed, "The Central German Office for Fighting the Gypsy Nuisance"

1904

The Prussian state parliament adopts proposals to control ‘Gypsy’ movement, crimes, and work

1905

The process of ‘counting’ Gypsies in the German states begins, with a census of Roma and Sinti in Bavaria, led by Dillmann and his team

Alfred Dillmann, publishes his *Gypsy Book and the Gypsy Plague*, as head of the *Central German Office for Fighting the Gypsy Nuisance*, in Munich

1906

French authorities distribute ID cards for ‘Tsiganes’ (Gypsies) across the country

Prussian ministers issue special police instructions to “combat the Gypsy nuisance”

1907

German Sinti and Roma begin to migrate from hostile regions to other parts of western Europe

1920

Karl Binding and Alfred E. Hoche publish, *Permission to destroy lives unworthy of life*, arguing for extermination of certain groups, including those with mental disabilities; 14th July 1933 a law is passed by the new Nazi government permitting this policy

1922

Mass finger-printing and photographing of Sinti and Roma across Germany begins in Baden, presaging the future – 1927 in Prussia

1927

Bavaria introduces laws to curb ‘Gypsy’ movement in large groups, and forbidding them from owning any firearms, including hunting guns

1928

Mobile Sinti and Roma are placed under permanent surveillance by police across Germany

Nans F. Günther publishes a treatise that claims that ‘foreign blood’ was introduced in Europe by the ‘Gypsies’

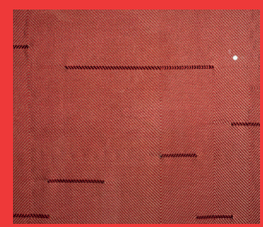
1934

Laws passed restricting *Zigeuner* from public parks; forced sterilisations of Roma and Sinti begin

1935

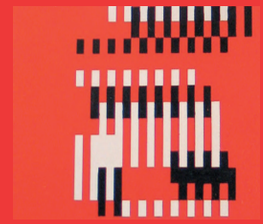
Removal of ‘Gypsies’ to ‘labour’ camps at Dachau, Sachsenhausen, and other locations begins

Nuremberg racial hygiene laws to protect German “blood and honour” are introduced, forbidding marriage between ‘Aryan’ and ‘non-Aryan’ populations



1935

National citizenship laws deprive Jews and ‘Gypsies’ of their citizenship and civil rights under German law



1938

The first documents to describe the “Final solution to the Gypsy question” are produced and signed by Heinrich Himmler

‘Gypsy Clean-Up Week’ sees hundreds of Roma and Sinti beaten, arrested, and deported to camps throughout Germany and Austria

1938

‘Combatting the Gypsy Plague’; the Reichs Central Office for the Gypsy Nuisance circular issued by Heinrich Himmler and the Racial Hygiene Research Centre

1939

Reinhard Heydrich issues a ‘Settlement Edict’ forbidding any movement of Roma and Sinti around the Reich (Germany, Austria, Bohemia, and the occupied Polish territories)

1940

250 Romani children used as test subjects for Zyklon-B gas at Buchenwald concentration camp

1942

Mass deportation orders bring Roma and Sinti into the extermination camps, especially the Auschwitz-Birkenau II *Zigeunerfamilienlager*

1943

Experiments on Roma and Sinti adults and children begin in Dachau, Lackenbach, Ravensbrück, Auschwitz-Birkenau II

1944

May 16, the attempt to liquidate the *Zigeunerfamilienlager (Gypsy Family Camp)* by units of the *Waffen-SS* at Auschwitz-Birkenau fails, due to Romani resistance

Night of August 2/3, 2,897 Roma and Sinti gassed and incinerated at Auschwitz-Birkenau II, commemorated as *Kaló Memoriano Divés*

1945

January, the Auschwitz-Birkenau II extermination camp is evacuated

May, Hitler's Third Reich collapses, end of the Second World War in Europe

1946

Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society, vol.25/26, January to April (Parts 1&2), August to October (Parts 3&4), print testimony from survivors, Vanya Kochanowski, Frédéric Max, and Matéo Maximoff, denouncing the Romani Holocaust and calling for recognition and reparations for European Gypsies, Romá, and Sinti.

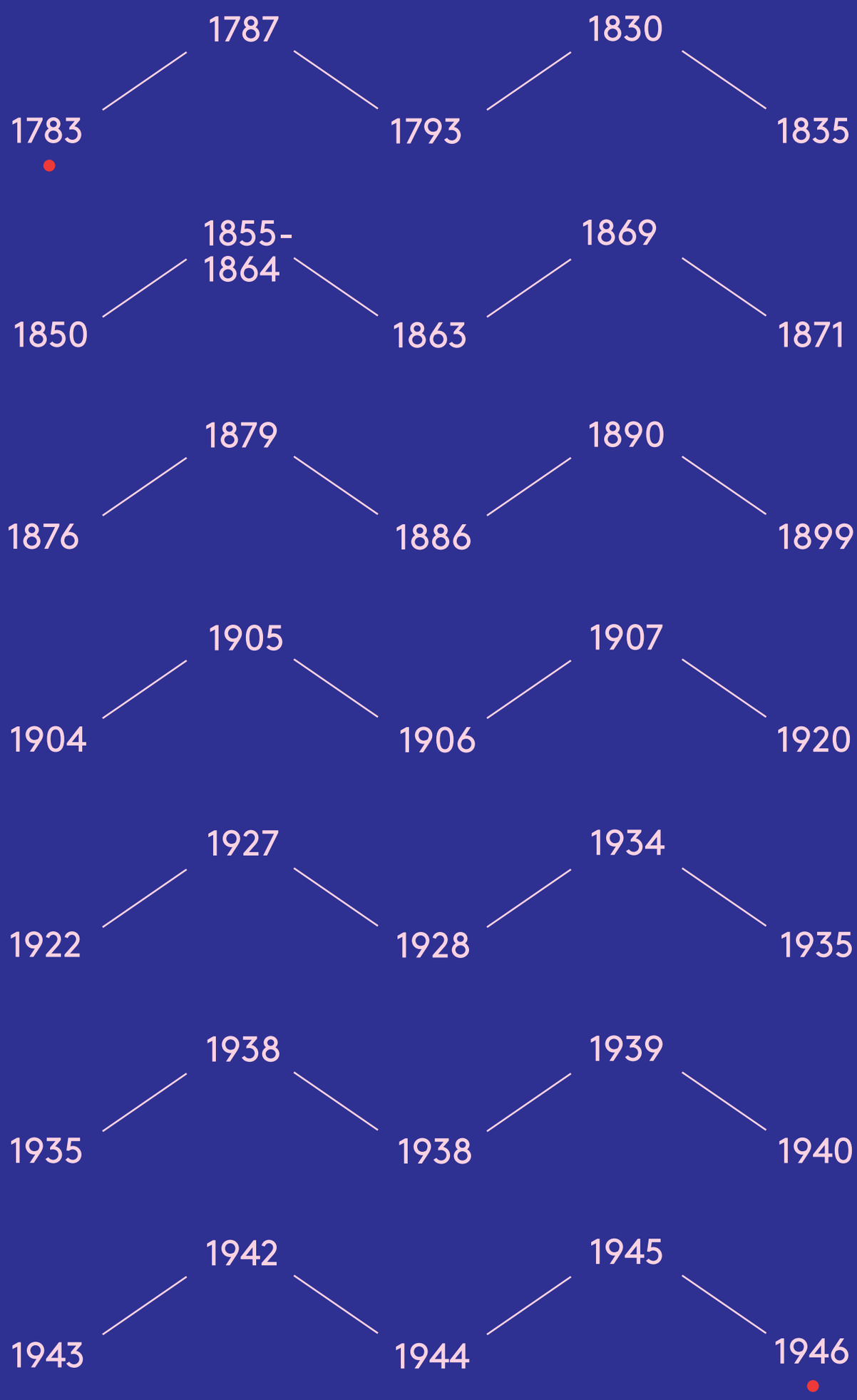

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Figure 3:
Slovakian Roma musicians, on their wagon,
August 1939.

HMDT The Romani Holocaust or Porrajmos in Nazi Occupied and Fascist Europe, 1936 to 1945

This learning resource contains materials that are, by the nature of the subject, potentially disturbing and distressing, as they deal with the Holocaust. Please be aware of the potential for 'triggering' in some sections of the learning resource, with some pupils that may have experienced trauma.

Context and Approaches: Context

This project is unique, amongst those that have sought to produce a learning resource for pupils and students, of the Romani Holocaust or *Porrajmos*, in that it is produced by a predominantly Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller team of historians, artists, political scientists, and designers. This approach has given the materials a focus that is very specific to the topic, in that there is a certain responsibility, or series of responsibilities, to the communities that those working on this project represent, i.e., Gypsy, Roma, Traveller.

These responsibilities might best be described as to pertaining those families who had relatives that were caught up in the terrible destruction that nearly overwhelmed the European Roma and Sinti, and other related communities, during the period of Nazi racialisation of the German state, when the Nazi party introduced laws that specified, in racist terms, who were and who were not, members of the society and state. Our responsibilities as historians, researchers, writers, and designers are to those that were themselves destroyed, because of this racialisation, and whose 'voices' were never recorded, or were lost, in the attempt to eradicate them and their communities.

There are also responsibilities to the families of those Roma and Sinti people who did not survive the measures adopted to eliminate Romani people from the Nazi state (1933 to 1945) and its allies across occupied Europe. These families have not been, by–and–large, represented in the narrative histories of the Nazi period or the Second World War, aside from a very few instances of Romani testimony from the survivors of the *Porrajmos*. Telling their story, as family members, often the children and grandchildren of Roma and Sinti, born in the years following 1945, some of whom went to great lengths to secure recognition and compensation for their parents and relatives, will feature in the learning resource.

The approach is driven by a fundamental desire to address the topic as scholars wanting to commemorate and memorialise the experience of the victims of the Romani Holocaust, or *Porrajmos*, whilst also recognising the particular genius (in ancient Greek sense of the 'spirit of the people'), of the Romani people, the ability to survive, and thrive, despite having no one holy book (such as exists for the Christians, Jews, and Muslims, for example), no inherited priesthood (such as the Brahmins of Hinduism), and, as Angus Fraser so clearly articulated, "...no promised land.". This learning resource seeks to be, as Acton has described the work of Romani and Traveller arts and artists, "...an act of affirmation, not one of defence".

As an act of affirmation, this project reflects one approach, identified by the Jewish philosopher, Avishai Margalit in his discussion of the ethics of memory, of the two approaches that he argues are possible (reconstructing an argument of his Father and Mother), whilst remaining respectful of the other approach:

> ***Mother:*** *The Jews were irretrievably destroyed. What is left is just a pitiful remnant of the great Jewish people [which for her meant European Jewry]. The only honourable role for the Jews that remain is to form communities of memory — to serve as "soul candles" like the candles that are ritually kindled in memory of the dead.*
> ***Father:*** *We, the remaining Jews, are people, not candles. It is a horrible prospect for anyone to live just for the sake of retaining the memory of the dead. That is what the Armenians opted to do. And they made a terrible mistake. We should avoid it at all cost. Better to create a community that thinks predominantly about the future and reacts to the present, not a community that is governed from mass graves.*

Figure 4:
Hungarian Roma, 1940

Finally, the impetus for this initiative has been widely recognised as necessary, by non-governmental organisations, charities working with education, rights, and equalities, and those who represent Gypsy, Roma, Traveller organisations in the U.K. In an article from the Guardian newspaper 9th February 2022, entitled, "Add genocide of Gypsies to national curriculum, say charities", the need for better knowledge and information about the genocide of Roma and Sinti during the Second World War is cited as being behind the widespread negative attitudes towards Gypsy, Roma, Traveller communities, and the relative 'acceptance' of prejudice and xenophobia towards them. From early recognition of what was then described as "the forgotten Holocaust", in the 2000's, the belated acknowledgement of the suffering of Roma and Sinti, 1936 to 1945, has become more widely understood, if not empathised with. Even though perhaps not quite so widely "forgotten", the underlying facts and figures, the understanding of the *whys* and *wherefores*, is still under-appreciated, if recognised at all.

This learning resource is an attempt to address that 'gap' in knowledge, understanding, and empathy, through working with educators of Welsh secondary school pupils, encouraging them to explore the topic with their students and deliver the kind of information and knowledge that will be the bedrock of a future, more socially cohesive, tolerant, and anti-racist Wales by 2030.

Approaches

The approach adopted to deliver this affirmative, respectful assessment of the Romani *Porrajmos* is also illustrative ('showing'), rather than explicative ('explaining'), in the sense that there is no one answer to the destruction of the Roma and Sinti in Nazi Europe, but there may be many, and we need to be the answer ourselves, to ensure change.

Finally, like the Jewish children on their way to the extermination camp in a play, this project is about addressing (in part), the double–murder of Roma and Sinti people, during the *Porrajmos*. In the play, the children are loaded into trucks but not fed, and are so hungry they ultimately eat the cardboard labels with their names on, before they arrive at the gas chambers, thus being erased twice, as their names will forever be lost.

The names of *Roma, Sinti, Yenische, Ashkali*, and others were never recorded, so they were destroyed and 'blotted out', as the Bible has it, from the face of the Earth. The material must attempt to address this erasure to seek recognition for those lost, by those who remain – us.

Figure 5:
Balkan Roma WWII, 1940

Figure 6:
Turkish Romani Family, 1940

Figure 7:
Hungarian Roma, 1940

Figure 8:
Hungarian Roma Family; Roma under German Authority, 1940

Figure 9:
Roma in Constanța, Rumania, WWII, 1940

Figure 10:
Balkan Roma with linen spindles, 1940

Figure 11:
Ostfront, 1940

What is genocide?

In 1943 Raphael Lemkin coined the term genocide, which the UN defines as, "Any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group", such as:

a. *Killing members of the group*
b. *Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group*
c. *Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part*
d. *Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group*
e. *"Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group."*

Clearly, the categories above contain both measures that are direct and immediate (the actual murder of individuals), in that they happened during the period we are considering, and indirect and lasting, in that they have longer–term impacts and have continued to happen to the present (or very recent past). Without even delving into the question of what constitutes cultural genocide, in the case of the Romani and Traveller peoples, nearly all the acts described above, in the UN definition, have taken place in the past, or are still taking place. As such, the point can (should?) be made that a slow, inexorable genocide (or perhaps, *Romacide*), is taking place still. The post-1945 period following the Romani Holocaust is maintained by legal measures that states use to reduce sustainable conditions for Romani and Traveller lives:

f. *the removal of children by state officers (social workers) from Romani and Traveller families (in many countries)*
g. *the forcible sterilisation of Romani men and women that continues in much of central and eastern Europe*
h. *the restrictions on freedom of movement through draconian legislation that defines Romani and Traveller lifestyles as 'criminal'*
i. *the continuing monitoring of Romani and Traveller families and communities through surveillance, keeping records of family trees, 'stop-and-search' of Romani and Traveller individuals, groups, and vehicles, unauthorised collection of data through 'spot checks' on Traveller sites (Vehicle Identification Numbers, licence plates)*
j. *arbitrary arrest and detention of Romani and Traveller people whenever a crime is committed in the neighbourhood of a Romani settlement or Traveller site.*

Stanton suggests that "...structural factors such as totalitarian or autocratic government or minority rule correlate substantially with the incidence of genocide" (Gregory H Stanton, *Early Warning*); he has devised a developmental model of the stages of genocide. The eight stages of genocide are, accordingly:

k. *classification ("Us vs The Other")*
l. *symbolisation*
m. *dehumanisation*
n. *organisation (particularly the formation of 'hate' groups)*
o. *polarisation (taking the Us vs the Other to extremes, through populism, populist media, 'hate speech')*
p. *preparation (the identification – differing ID and visual cues for differentiation; expropriation – property & material wealth; rounding up, and transportation of victims)*
q. *extermination and mass killing*
r. *denial of the events and processes*

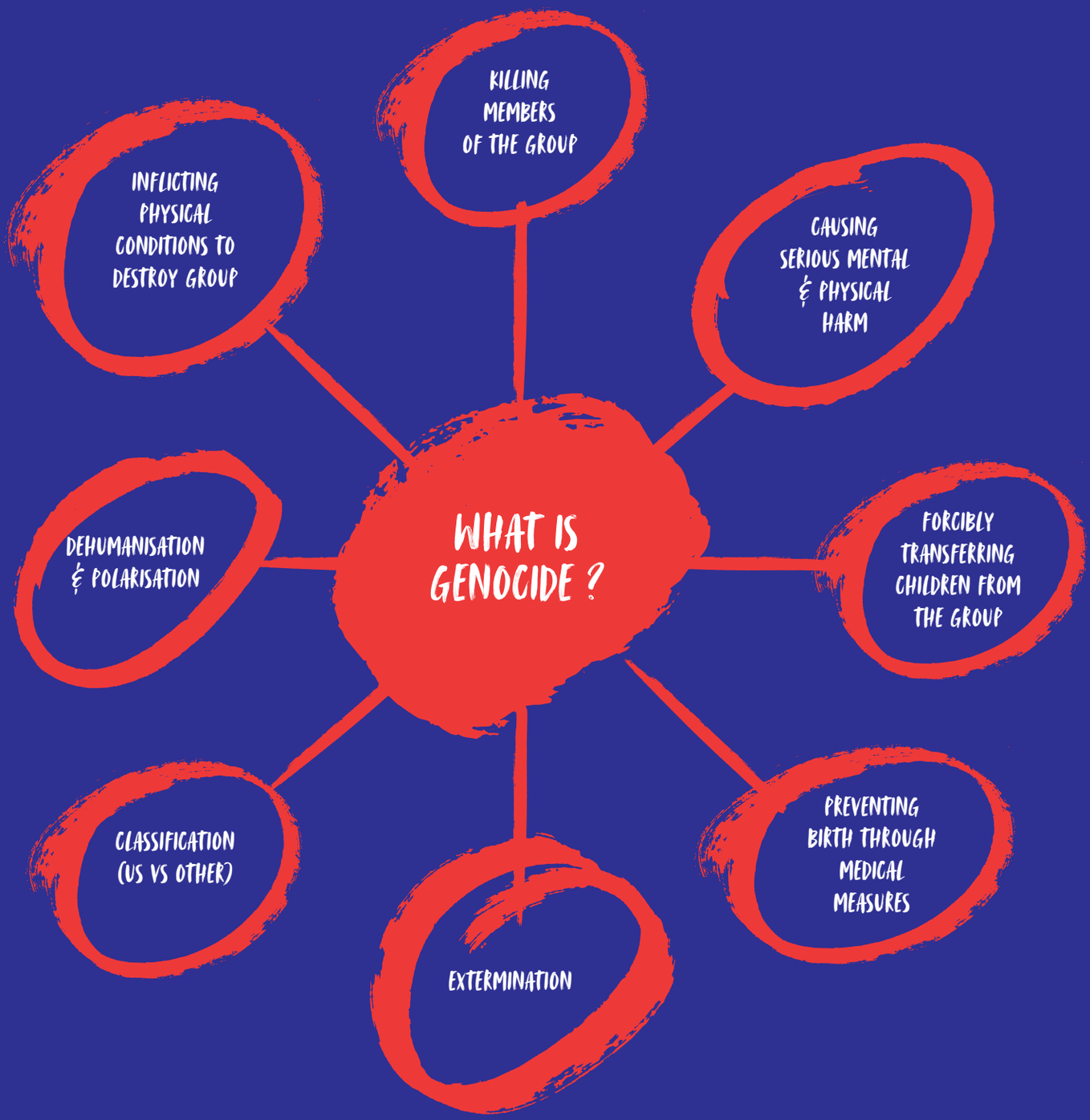
Empirical research (research based upon first-hand observation and evidence), by Helen Fein, Matthew Krain, Barbara Harff, Benjamin Valentino, and others has shown that genocide is most often committed by elites in society that are attempting to stay in power in the face of perceived threats to their dominance.

Six factors enhance the likelihood of genocide:

s. *prior genocidal episodes in the same polity (*e.g.*, nation-state)*
t. *autocracy (governance based on wealthy, minority elites around one leader)*
u. *ethnic minority rule (governance based on one ethnic community over other ethnic groups)*
v. *political upheaval during war or revolution*
w. *exclusionary ideology ('not one of us')*
x. *closure of borders to international trade*

Structural factors such as *totalitarian* (single party), *oligarchic* (small, influential, and wealthy groups) or *autocratic* (single individual) government, and minority rule correlate substantially with the incidence of genocide.

Long-term policies for genocide prevention should promote active, pluralistic democracy, freedom (both of press and media, and of individual expression), and social tolerance. Rudy Rummel's carefully documented conclusion that open, tolerant democracies do not commit genocide against their own enfranchised (those with the right to vote) populations has often been challenged, but never refuted (in this case, Gypsies, Roma, Travellers are often disenfranchised in their countries, e.g., Czech Roma who are defined as 'Slovaks' and therefore not considered Czech citizens).


WHAT IS GENOCIDE ?
KILLING MEMBERS OF THE GROUP
INFLICTING PHYSICAL CONDITIONS TO DESTROY GROUP
CAUSING SERIOUS MENTAL & PHYSICAL HARM
DEHUMANISATION & POLARISATION
FORCIBLY TRANSFERRING CHILDREN FROM THE GROUP
CLASSIFICATION (US VS OTHER)
PREVENTING BIRTH THROUGH MEDICAL MEASURES
EXTERMINATION

The protection of democracies requires that, in the face of threats by extremists (neo-Nazis for example), military coups, or right-wing populist movements (such as 6th January 2021 assault on the US Capitol) to overthrow those democracies, the warning be communicated as early as possible.

Methodology:

The materials for this learning resource have been collected through research, primarily online, of a range of sources, both 'first hand' – original documents, personal accounts, individual testimonies – and 'secondary', e.g., those materials produced by historians, scholars, and researchers who have looked at this topic before, since the events of the Romani Holocaust or *Porrajmos*.

A great deal of research has been carried out by historians, artists, and social scientists to better inform and acknowledge the rather generalised overviews that so frequently 'pop-up' in 'Gypsy' histories, whether written by Romani or non-Romani scholars. Careful examination of the sources has been complemented by searches for imagery that exemplifies and illustrates the main narrative, without being too explicit in content that can disturb and distress.

Literature survey:

The kind of literature that has been surveyed – read and digested by the writers and researchers working on this resource – is made up of a number of differing texts: Roma and Sinti witnesses and survivor testimonies; testimonies of family members and relatives of survivors, about their parents' or grandparents' experiences; stories of survivors' own attempts (often repeatedly) to gain recognition (understanding and acknowledgement), and receive compensation for their treatment and suffering; or accounts of those of their children or grandchildren who helped them in their efforts; Roma and Sinti written accounts by historians or others; research by Romani historians; accounts by non–Roman historians who have written about the history of the Romani people (often using the term, 'Gypsies' as a 'catch all' for the various related communities).

One of the most important sources for the understanding of the impact of the Romani Holocaust, or *Porrajmos*, are personal testimonies from survivors, and the literature that we have surveyed and used draws upon these individual testimonies.

Language and terms Holocaust, *Shoah, Porrajmos, Samudaripen*

The term, 'Holocaust' has been used quite widely in many different contexts, according to foremost Romani scholar Ian Hancock, leading it to become somewhat vague and imprecise. In seeking a term that would be particular in its application to the Roma and Sinti (and other related groups), Hancock and other Romani Studies (the field of study about Romani and Traveller peoples) scholars in the mid-1990's coined the Romani language term, *Porrajmos*, and the more explicit term, *O Baró Porrajmos* ('The Great Devouring' or 'Great Consuming'). The term itself is a *neo-logism*, that is a 'new word' (from the Greek, 'neo logos'), one that was derived from existing Romani words, but not used before.

However, *Porrajmos*, as a term for the Roma and Sinti Genocide (or sometimes *Porrajmos)* is not universally accepted by all Romani groups or scholars; the debate over the use of the term *Porrajmos*, has meant that some activists – such as the Roma linguist Marcel Courthiade – and international institutions – such as the Council of Europe – have adopted alternatives to the term, which they consider to be offensive as it has connotations of sexual violence. These scholars and institutions prefer to use instead the phrase, *Sa o mudarimós* or *Sa o mudaripén*, 'the murder of all of us', or 'the mass killing', which they consider more accurate in conjunction with a reconsideration of the mechanisms of modern exclusion (the ways in which Romani and Traveller people are discriminated against), or what they term anti-Roma racism.

However, Hancock has strongly argued for the continuing use of the term *Porrajmos* upon a linguistic basis, in that the complete 'consuming' of Romani bodies, through incineration after suffocation by Zyklon-B gas in chambers built for that purpose, justifies the use of the term, with the word's roots in the Romani language for 'consumption'.

The term, 'Romani Holocaust' is also frequently used to distinguish it from the more general, 'Holocaust', which tends to be more closely associated with the Jewish *Shoah* (a Hebrew word meaning 'catastrophe'). Many Roma academics and activists prefer to use this term, Romani Holocaust, as a less controversial term than either, *Porrajmos,* or *Samudaripen.*

As part of the process of widening awareness about the Romani Holocaust, or *Porrajmos*, the learning resource uses all three, but primarily recognises the wider usage, amongst Roma, Sinti, Travellers, and Gypsy organisations, of *Porrajmos*, whilst acknowledging that this is not universally recognised by all Roma, Sinti, Gypsy, or Traveller communities (or individuals). Organisations such as the Open Society Foundations, the Roma Initiatives Office, the European Roma Institute for Arts & Culture, and the Roma Education Fund do use this term, albeit guardedly, so the picture is complex.

The learning resource also uses another neologism as a term for the continuing physical and cultural destruction of Romani and Traveller peoples: *Romacide*. This is a term coined for this learning resource, as a description of the post-1945 situation where aspects of genocide, such as removal of children, forced sterilisation, slow poisoning of Romani communities through forced relocation to heavily polluted waste areas, or rubbish dumps, are still present and being enacted as part of a local, regional, or state policy.

Use of the term 'Gypsy' in this learning resource is in historical context, and as an *ethnonym* (a self-ascribed ethnic description) amongst those communities who choose to use the term, such as Gypsies in Wales, and across the U.K., where this material is to be delivered and distributed.

Historically, the term 'Gypsy' recognises the association with the mediaeval term from which it is derived, 'Egyptian' (from the Byzantine Greek, *Aiguptoi*), and as such, the adoption of the term by early Romani communities in the Byzantine Empire, giving an economic advantage, encouraging the notion of them as 'famous' or even 'original' fortune-tellers and diviners (much as modern advertising will use phrases such as, 'the original and best'). Biblical Egypt was considered the origin of all magic and sorcery, from the stories of *Yahweh* (the term for God used by the ancient Hebrews of the Old Testament); the prophet and leader of the Hebrews, the Prophet Moses; Pharoah, and the emancipation of the Hebrew people (Book of Exodus, the second book of the Bible).

Other historical terms, such as *Heiden* (heathen), *Tatar* (Tartar, an Inner Asian people closely associated with the Mongol Empire), *Bohemian* (from the Czech region of Bohemia), *Garachi* (from Karachi, used throughout Central Asia), *Ghagar* (from Arabic), and others will not be used, as many are pejorative (scornful), or simply inaccurate.
Use of the term 'Gypsy' is also present in current legislation, in Wales and the U.K. in the legal formulation, **Gypsies, Roma, Travellers** in legislation, strategies, action–plans, and government guidelines. This terminology is only applicable in the U.K., as elsewhere in Europe and beyond, the term 'Gypsy' is pejorative (seen as derogatory, scornful, and offensive). Amongst the Roma population in the U.K. the term, 'Gypsy' is also considered unacceptable, in terms of stereotypical and negative associations.

Introduction to Romani & Traveller people

Who are the Romani people?

Romani and Traveller people are known by many different terms: Gypsies, Roma, Travellers, *Manouche, Gens de Voyage, Gitanos, Yenische, Sinti, Woonwagenbewoners, Quinqui, Mercheros, Ashkali, Romungro, Egyptians, Beyash*, and others in the Romani and Traveller world. To learn more about these (and other terms) used by Romani and Traveller peoples, see the Romani Cultural & Arts Co.'s *Romani* and *Traveller Alphabet*, 2019.

The Romani people are often referred to in the singular, as a homogeneous (unified and collectively similar) ethnic group. Like any ethnic community, from modern Welsh, Irish, Scottish, and English communities, to Swedes, Norwegians, Finnish, and Danes, the Romani people are diverse in their beliefs, traditions, occupations, whether they travel or not, which groups within the collectivity (the largest possible community) they belong to, and other differences. Just as some Welsh people are English speakers only, or Baptists rather than Catholics, live in Pen-y-bont rather than Patagonia, or Llandudno rather than London, Gypsies, Roma, and Travellers are also diverse and different in many aspects of their lives.

All Gypsies, Roma, and Travellers (of Romani ancestry) do share ideas about having a common origin, one that go back to mediaeval India (and not Egypt, as people mistakenly believed in the past). This is a matter of history, the study of the past of the Romani people, and linguistics, languages, and developments, from very ancient tongues, such as Sanskrit, to the modern day *Rromani-chib* or the Romani language.

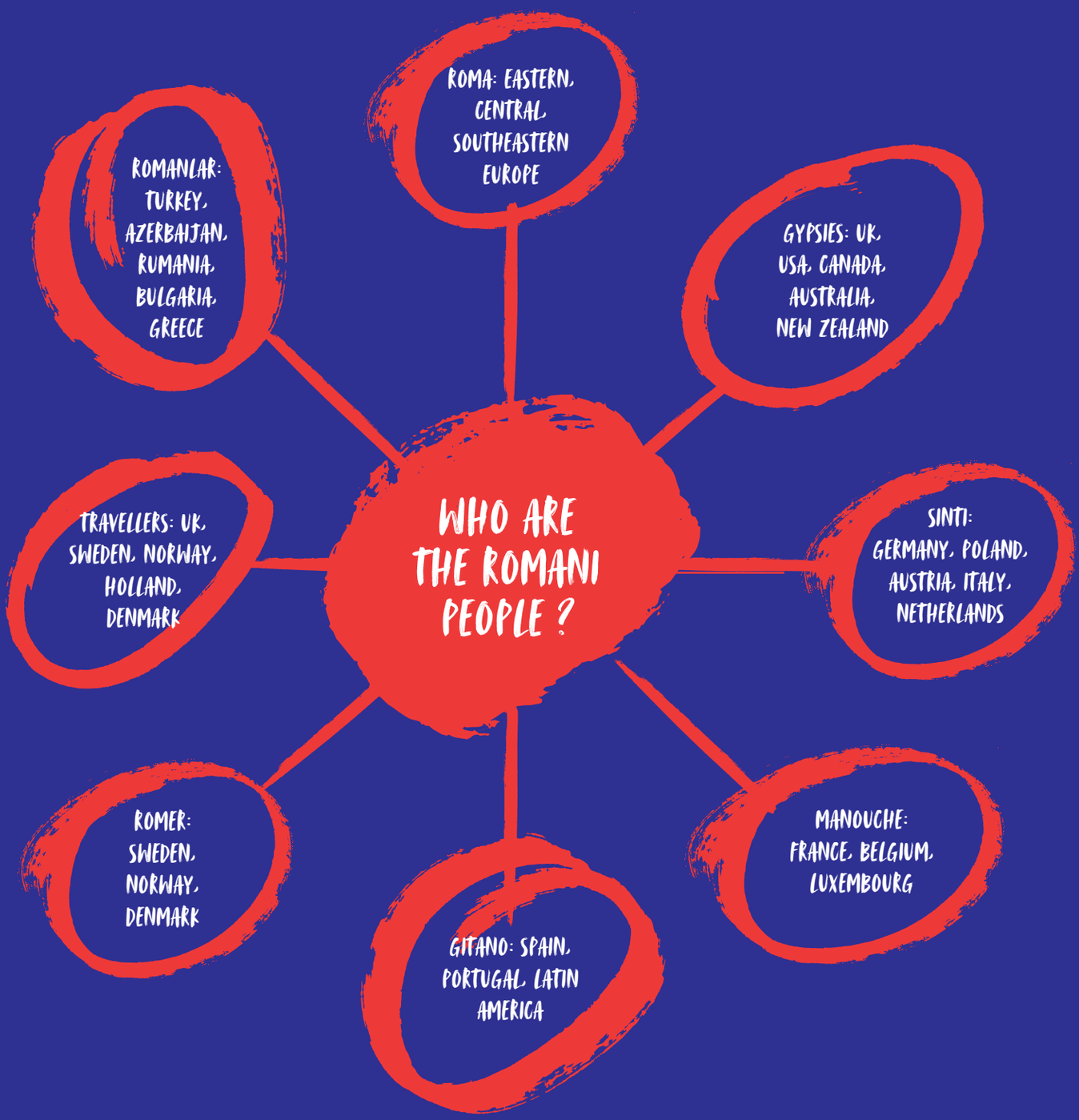
The late mediaeval arrival in Europe of the original 'Egyptians', from the Byzantine Empire, began a process of dispersion, or *diaspora* (a word describing the migration of people, like a dandelion seed head being blown by the wind), of groups seeking new economic and social opportunities in south-eastern, central, eastern, and eventually, western Europe and the Americas, from the 11th century Common Era (CE) to 20th century.

Romani and Traveller peoples also share, to a greater or lesser extent, ideas about shared historical experiences, albeit ones of exclusion, persecution, and ultimately, attempted extermination by non-Romani, majority populations in modern nation-states. Romani peoples, as is more correct, are collectively made up of related, or linked ethnic communities, just as Jewish people are made up of Ashkenazy and Sephardic Jews (those Jewish people who trace their mediaeval origins to European Jewish communities, the Ashkenazy, and those who look to North African and Asian Jewish communities, the Sephardim). Jewish people, of course, identify their ancestral heritage as the ancient lands of Israel and Judah, as related in the Jewish *Torah* (the Hebrew Bible) or 'Old Testament' of the Christians.

The varieties of Romani and Traveller peoples in modern Europe, and across the rest of the world, acknowledge these common threads that unite them, together with language (see below), and identify with a shared flag, an international anthem ('Gelem, Gelem' meaning 'I went, I went'), and an awareness of international organisations, such as the International Romani Union, and the World Romani Congress that takes place every few years.

Who are the Irish Traveller people?

The Irish Traveller population, *Pavees* or *Minceírí*, are another group in modern Wales and across the U.K. (and the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and parts of Europe), who have a very different ancestry and origins, amongst early mediaeval Celtic or Gaelic society in Ireland, under the kingdoms and High King at Tara. As itinerant tradespeople and skilled craftspeople, the 4th century CE ancestors of *Pavees* were known as *an lucht siúil,* or 'the walking people'. With the establishment of a Gaelic Irish kingdom in Dyfed, following the period of Roman rule of the British Isles (Brittania, as the Romans called it before leaving in 410CE), the *an lucht siúil* came to Wales in the 5th century CE, as part of the *Expulsion of the Déisi*, an Irish migration described in the epic saga from the early mediaeval period. Migration and adaptation in mediaeval Wales opened up new possibilities for trade and craft for the *Minceírí*. Irish Travellers have been present in Wales since this time and are therefore the oldest minority ethnic community continuously inhabiting the country, and maintaining a tradition of mobility, occupation, and craft.


WHO ARE THE ROMANI PEOPLE ?
ROMA: EASTERN, CENTRAL, SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE
ROMANLAR: TURKEY, AZERBAIJAN, RUMANIA, BULGARIA, GREECE
GYPSIES: UK, USA, CANADA, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND
TRAVELLERS: UK, SWEDEN, NORWAY, HOLLAND, DENMARK
SINTI: GERMANY, POLAND, AUSTRIA, ITALY, NETHERLANDS
ROMER: SWEDEN, NORWAY, DENMARK
MANOUCHE: FRANCE, BELGIUM, LUXEMBOURG
GITANO: SPAIN, PORTUGAL, LATIN AMERICA

Introduction to Romani language

What is the Romani language?

The language that most Romani groups speak, to some degree, is related to ancient Sanskrit, and other Indo-European languages. Sanskrit is a language that is itself descended from a prehistoric origin, known by language scholars as Old Indo-Aryan. Indo-European is a linguistic definition that has been used widely in other contexts, such as being applied to groups of historical peoples, often incorrectly, and this term is frequently misunderstood or misapplied, quite deliberately in some cases (such as the Nazi ideology of 'Aryan races').

The Romani language, *Rromani-chib* or *Romanës*, is a language related to other Indo-European languages (see language tree), and therefore many of the modern languages spoken in modern Europe. Romani is part of what is called a language tree of Indo-European language families, with Romani related to the Indo-Iranian–Indic–Sanskrit language family. This language family includes Hindi, Urdu, Marathi, and others, but Romani developed in Europe, not the Indian lands, and more specifically in the Byzantine Empire, what is now modern Turkey (or *Türkiye*) and Greece, during the 11th to the 14th centuries CE. The first record we have of the Romani language, Romanës, is from 1415CE, in the Peloponnesus.

There has been an enormous amount of debate and discussion about the Romani language and its origins, amongst Romani Studies scholars and linguistic researchers, over the past two hundred years (some would argue even further back to the 16th century), but the success of late 18th and 19th century linguistics scholars in identifying the ancient components of the Romani language, in Indo-European (what is now described as 'Indic') languages, has been borne out by modern scholarship from experts such as Ian Hancock (himself of Romani origins), Yaron Matras, and Dieter Halwachs, all of whom are professors in their field of linguistic studies of Romani.

We know that the ancestors of modern Romani and Traveller populations (those of Indian origins) travelled from the north-western and north-central Indian lands, after the change in Old Indo-Aryan language that saw a shift, linguistically, from three genders (masculine, feminine, and neuter, similar to modern languages such as German, Russian), to New Indo-Aryan, with two genders (masculine and feminine, similar to languages such as English, Welsh). Like English, neuter gender words in Old Indo-Aryan were reassigned to masculine or feminine, around 1,000CE. As the ancestors of modern Romani-speaking populations left the Indic lands following this transition, it must have been after this time.

Figure 12:
Gas chamber at Auschwitz - Birkenau I (Oświęcim, Poland 2014)

Figure 13:
Fritz; taken from the Documentation Centre Exhibition in Cologne about Roma and Sinti

Figure 14:
Fritz Handprint; taken from the Documentation Centre Exhibition in Cologne about Roma and Sinti

Figure 15:
Auschwitz (Brushes)

Figure 16:
The Historical Museum of the Liberation of Tasso

Figure 17:
Sinti Family Memorial, Hannover

Figure 12

Figure 13

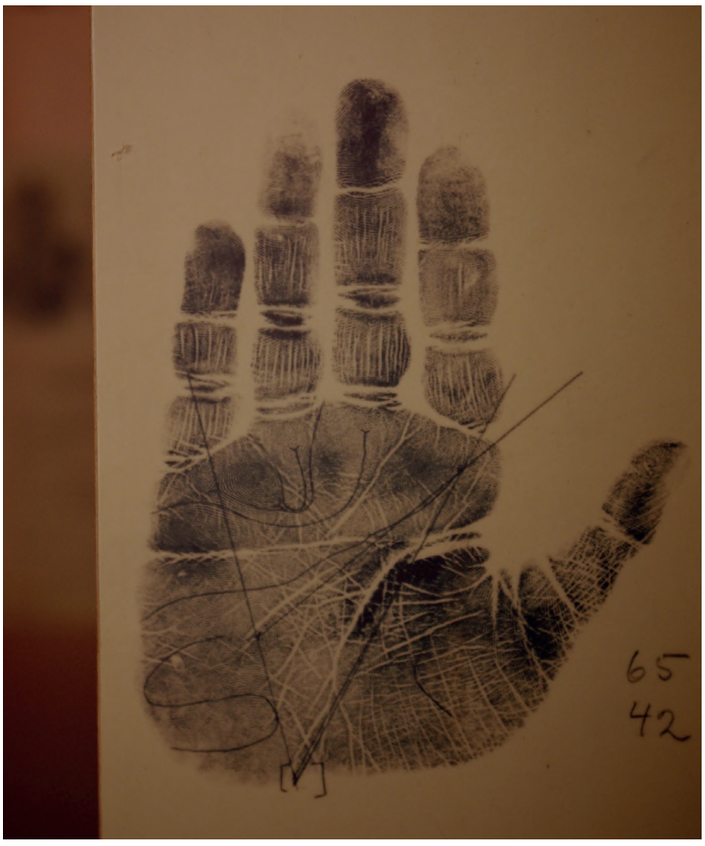


Figure 14

Figure 15

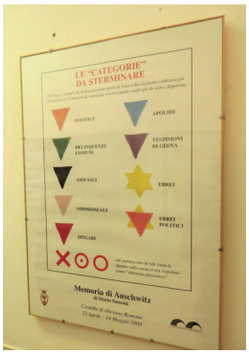


Figure 16

Figure 17

Figure 18

Figure 20

Figure 21

Figure 19

Figure 22

The “Gypsy List” contained names and descriptions of alleged ‘Gypsy’ criminals and was intended as an instrument of control and suppression of those increasingly perceived as a threat to German social order.

Figure 18:
Auschwitz (Shoes)

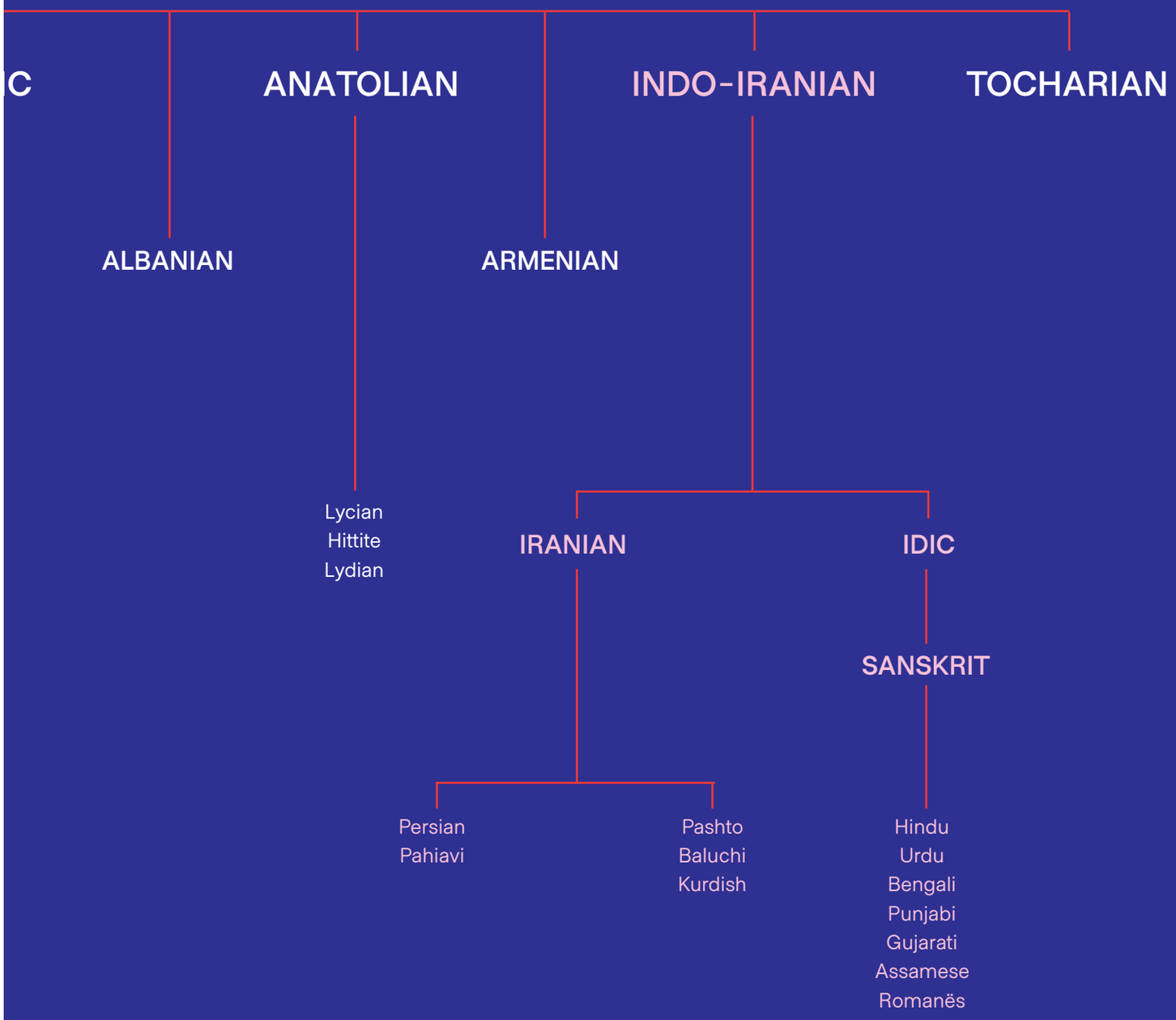
Figure 19:
Auschwitz (Glasses)

Figure 20:
Auschwitz (Sign)

Figure 21:
Crematorium oven no.2,
Buchenwald - Concentration
Camp

Figure 22:
Auschwitz
(Railtrack Approach)

Proto-Indo-European
BALTO-SLAVIC
GERMANIC
CELTIC
ITALIC
HELLENIC
BALTIC
SLAVIC
GAELIC
BRYTHONIC
Lithuanian
Latvian
Irish Gaelic
Scottish Gaelic
Welsh
Breton
WEST SLAVIC
EAST SLAVIC
SOUTH SLAVIC
LATIN
Lithuanian
Latvian
Ukranian
Russian
Portuguese
Spanish
Catalan
French
Italian
Rumanian
Bulgarian
Macedonian
Serbo-Croatian
GREEK
NORTH GERMANIC
WEST GERMANIC
EAST GERMANIC
Icelandic
Norwegian
Swedish
Danish
English
Frisian
Dutch
Lithuanian
Latvian
Low German
High German
Yiddish



The Indo-European Language Family

The Romani language as related to other Indo-European languages, simplified to show the relationship to other modern European languages, particularly Welsh and English.

Introduction to Romani history
Romani people, hidden from history

Romani history has often been overlooked, or even denied an existence, as if the Romani people are only present in the here-and-now, without any past or concern for the future. This perspective from some anthropologists has given rise to the idea that the past is of little interest to Romani people, whilst the future is of little concern, and 'Gypsies' live only for the day. Little has been done to challenge that perspective until recently and even now, the repetition of such notions is commonplace in popular books, television programmes, and majority cultures.

The fact that many peoples living in marginalised, impoverished, and excluded circumstances have a predominant concern for their daily welfare and comfort should not be surprising. Increasing numbers of people in modern Britain are being forced to find ways to feed their families and keep them warm; this tells us this is common to difficult economic circumstances, not to particular ethnic communities. Having the luxury to contemplate the future and examine the past is one that has always been associated with the better-off people, those who are secure, the groups in societies that have serviced the elites, or the religious who live in communities supported by the peasants and workers.

Romani history has also been hotly debated amongst scholars and researchers from differing perspectives and different communities; a very rough division can be made between those who are from Romani and Traveller backgrounds themselves, or sympathetic to Romani and Traveller peoples, and those from the majority populations, i.e., are not from Romani or Traveller heritages. The primary discussions have been about the nature of the original ancestors of modern Romani people, with many arguing that these ancestors were the 'outcasts' in the caste society of mediaeval India, the so-called untouchables, whilst others argue for a military origin amongst the warriors and princes of the Indian *Rajput* kingdoms of the period. Romani history, in fact, tells us that the ancestors of Romani people today, just like every other population, were a broad mixture of differing people from different occupations and diverse social classes.

The history of the Romani people is one that stretches back to the end of the first millennium (1000CE) and to the lands of the Indian subcontinent. As Hindus, the ancestors of the modern Romani populations were engaged in a wide variety of occupations and trades, many of them associated with the military organisation of Indian kings and princes, or Rajah and Rajput castes, and the complex organisation of Hindu society in the late 10th century CE, commonly called the caste system.

This was a way of dividing people according to ideas of worth (or value) to the wider society, and of notions of prestige, or social status in Rajput society. The kings and queens (Rajahs and Ranis) were part of the highest status caste in society and led the *Kshatriya* or warrior caste. Auxiliaries and servitors to this warrior caste might be *Kshatriya* themselves, as accompanying soldiers the warriors, usually more lightly armed and armoured than their soldiers and warriors. They were part of the high-status caste too, although not quite on the same level as the Rajput *Kshatriya* warriors and would have meant that for every warrior on a horse or elephant, there were about four or five auxiliary troops, usually on smaller ponies, or on foot as part of the infantry. It was the responsibility of each warrior to bring his own auxiliary troops as part of the army, pay for their weapons, light armour, and military gear (including their tents and transport and transport wagons).

The other auxiliary servitors were those that looked after the armour, the weapons, those skilled in making and mending these when necessary. Their role was essential to the functioning of the armies of the Indian Rajput armies, because they could not function without without the armourers, metalworkers, fletchers (arrow-makers), bowyers (bow-makers), and other master-craftspeople (tentmakers, for example) who provided all that was needed for soldiers and warriors to fight battles and wars. These servitors would have been many more in number than the actual warrior group on a ratio of about 3:1. In total then, each warrior could have as many as ten auxiliary troops and servitors with him, not including cooks, servants, and slaves. There may also be concubines and 'camp followers', youths, and children (who might be there to learn the so-called 'art of war', or just to fetch and carry). Any army in the period from antiquity to the late mediaeval would have had a huge number of auxiliary troops and servitors as well as non-combatants.

In addition to all of these people, there were always a number of wagons to carry the supplies, tents, gear, clothing, cooking utensils (sometimes a whole series of mobile kitchens operating on the move and when in camp); called the 'baggage train', this could stretch for miles behind the marching army and would grow with each victory over other armies or captured cities, when booty and plunder taken would add enormously to the train. Drawn by oxen, these baggage trains would be a valuable source of riches in any conflict for whoever won the battle.

The final component in this huge enterprise were the merchants and entertainers who followed the armies, people either making a living supplying goods (clothes and accoutrements for example), or services (washers, menders, dancers, acrobats, tumblers, jugglers, story-tellers, puppeteers, actors, fortune-tellers [soldiers were and are notoriously superstitious]) and magicians (in the sense of practitioners of propitiatory magic) that could protect warriors from harm and might also disable enemies from inflicting injury.

When any society went to war, from Alexander the Great (r.336BCE to 323BCE), to Mahmoud of Ghazna (r.997CE to 1030CE), up to two-thirds of the army would be made-up of servitors, craftspeople, merchants, entertainers, and non-combatants; in an army of ten thousand, for example, only 3,300 would be warriors, auxiliaries, and soldiers.

It is in these 'additional, groups', the servitors, auxiliaries, and non-combatants, that the ancestors of the modern Romani population are to be found; the people who survived a series of confrontations and major battles between two groups of Turkic peoples in the middle of the 11th century CE: the Ghaznavid and the Saldjûk Turks. These survivors fled westwards, beginning the 'Long March West' to Byzantium and Europe in the mediaeval period.

Figure 23: Gypsy mother and child at Constantinople; artist Miner Kilbourne Kellogg, born Manlius Square, NY 1814-died Toledo, OH 1889

The 'Egyptians' in Byzantium: Constantinople in the 11th to 15th century

The arrival in the Byzantine Empire c.1050CE is the first appearance we have of the ancestors of modern Romani people, in the historical record. Identified as 'Egyptians', practicing magic and divination (fortune-telling), bear-leading, acrobatics, and living in 'black tents' on the outskirts of Constantinople, Thessaloniki, Methoni, and other cities in the empire. At first the 'Egyptians' were invited by the Emperor, Constantine IX 'Monomachos' (meaning, 'he who fights alone'), to carry out the task of clearing wild beasts from his hunting grounds just outside the walls of the city. The Egyptians did this, but were condemned by bishops and patriarchs (the head of the Orthodox church in Byzantium) for practicing sorcery and conjuring, with stiff penalties for any Byzantine who consulted them for their fortunes or for charms of protection. Acrobats were not persecuted as entertainers, but even their skills were sometimes seen as 'magical' and not the product of training and practice. Snake-charming, bear-leading and other animal training were part-and-parcel of the 'Egyptians' and their economic activities in mediaeval Byzantium.

Over time, the 'Egyptians' developed other specialist trades, especially connected to metalworking and smithery. Shoemaking was another area that came to be associated with them, and working with leather more generally, especially fine leather from Muslim Iberia, called 'Cordoba' leather (from where we have the archaic English term for bootmakers, 'Cordwainers'). Entertainment and public performance was always a part of the economy for 'Egyptians', though there is no evidence of them playing instruments and dancing for the Byzantine public, which suggests that the long association between 'Gypsies' and music did not begin in this period, but later with the Ottoman Empire (1320CE to 1920).

Figure 24: Gypsy dervish at Constantinople; artist Miner Kilbourne Kellogg, born Manlius Square, NY 1814-died Toledo, OH 1889

The 15th century CE saw the development of the Romani language in Byzantium, recorded primarily in the European territories of the empire, in what is now the Peloponnesus, Greece. It is also where the Romani identity, in its modern form, emerges; first as a term in mediaeval Greek, *Romitoi* or possibly, *Romiti*. This term seems to have been used to mean, 'sons of the Romans' or 'sons of the emperors of Rome'. The Byzantine Empire was the continuation of the Eastern Roman Empire (the Western Roman Empire fell to the barbarians in the late 5th century CE), and the inhabitants of the empire considered themselves 'Romans' and inheritors of the long Roman past of the Republic and the Empire. The 'Egyptians' were therefore claiming an inheritance as 'sons of the Romans'.

We still find that idea in the Romani word used by Welsh Gypsies about themselves, *Romanichal*. It is also present amongst the Turkish Romani people, or *Românlar* (singular, *Román* with the stress on the second syllable). The European Roma use the term, *Rom* to mean 'human being', and 'man' (usually married man; the feminine form is *Romni*). The heritage of the 'Romans' (i.e., the Byzantines) is still in the Romani language.

The 'Egyptians' into 'Gypsies': Europe in the early modern period

In the following centuries, the 'Egyptians' made their way into the rest of Europe, from their 14th century arrival in the Balkans and south-eastern Europe, to their arrival in England and Scotland in the late 15th and early 16th centuries CE. Across Europe, the 'Egyptians' had been making their way, dressed in Byzantine clothing that marked them out as 'from the East', and dark-skinned in comparison to the surrounding populations unlike the Byzantine Empire where they were amongst many other phenotypically (meaning, physical characteristics) similar groups. The notion of darkness had negative connotations in Europe during this period, as did the idea of 'the East' where 'barbarians' such as the Vandals, Goths, Huns, Avars, Magyars, 'Saracens' (Turkish peoples), and Mongols had all originated in their assaults on European societies from the 4th century CE to the 14th century CE.

In the 15th century CE, the Ottomans had risen dramatically to power and conquered the Byzantines, taking the city of Constantinople in May 1453CE. The 'Egyptians' were quickly and mistakenly identified as 'Turks' or as being 'spies and deserters' from the Ottoman Empire. Their original claims of being pilgrims were quickly dismissed, and their stories of being apostate, that is being forcibly converted to Islam in the past (which they had been under the Ghaznavids in the 11th century CE), were disbelieved by Western European city authorities, princes and kings, but especially by the Roman Catholic Church who saw them as heretics (Christians who had rejected the 'correct' teachings of the Catholic Church) from the Orthodox east. The division in Christendom, over the primacy of the Pope of Rome or the Patriarch of Constantinople as the head of the Christian world, had led to 'the Great Schism' of 1045CE, with the excommunication of each by the other.

Figure 25: Gypsy at Constantinople; artist Miner Kilbourne Kellogg, born Manlius Square, NY 1814–died Toledo, OH 1889

Finally, the association of fortune-telling and divination with sorcery and magic, in the 15th and 16th centuries, was particularly suspicious, as far as the authorities were concerned, as such practices led the faithful astray and defied God's plan for humankind by seeking to change it or avoid aspects of it. 'Egyptians' or 'Gypsies' (the second term is a contraction of the first), were increasingly seen as in league with dark forces and to be ejected, or even eradicated through severe punishments and harsh laws. 'Gypsy' groups became smaller and took to avoiding major towns and urban centres, to stay away from arrest, torture and even death at the hands of local magistrates, for being 'Gypsies'.

Figure 26: A Gypsy cimbalom player from Galanta; Stock, Johann Martin, 1742-1800 (Engraver)

Figure 27: A Gypsy viola player from Galanta; Stock, Johann Martin, 1742-1800 (Engraver)

Some states, such as Scotland, had a somewhat different relationship with 'Gypsies' in the 16th and 17th century, but as Romani people spread across more of Europe, in an effort to find safety and security, so the *draconian* (from the ancient Athenian lawgiver, Draco in the 8th century BCE, who prescribed the death penalty for any crime) laws also spread quickly after them. From mass arrests, incarceration in camps, and hangings (or worse), to deportation to the New World, as slaves and those subjected to indentured servitude, 'Gypsies' faced an increasingly hostile and murderous environment. The infamous 'Gypsy hunts' of the German lands, in the 17th and 18th centuries, represented some of the worst repression experienced by Romani people, and led the way for later, harsher treatment in Germany, in the 19th and 20th centuries.

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the situation for 'Gypsies' in many countries in Europe was eased a little, with interest in Oriental languages, the Ottoman Empire, and the Indian lands, especially as the Romani language was found to have an Indian origin and retain about 60% Indic vocabulary. The interest in folklore, traditions, and culture amongst not just elites but amongst ordinary peasants and people, was at its height, as new nations emerged from the collapse of older empires, such as was happening in the Balkans and central Europe. The Gypsy Lore Society was founded in 1888 (not 1889) in Edinburgh and it published the *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society* seeking to capture and catalogue 'Gypsy' culture, traditions, language, and stories.

A great many of these researchers and scholars were gentlemen with private incomes and the leisure to explore these topics, meeting with like-minded gentlemen across Europe. Explorers and adventurers were also part of this group, keen to connect their knowledge to the field of Gypsy studies, often through trips or expeditions to regions of the continent where large numbers of Gypsy people were living, e.g., south-eastern Europe and the Ottoman Empire. Some went even as far afield as India, in order to trace the origins of language and identify the modern-day relationships with groups in the Indian lands and Gypsies at home in England and Wales.

However, by the end of the 19th century, the ideas of *eugenics*, or the 'science' of hierarchies of 'races' (with white, Anglo-Saxon men at the pinnacle of the pyramid, and 'Gypsies' at the bottom), with notions of 'superiority' of particular ethnic groups, and 'inferiority' of others (based upon culturally biased measurements of intelligence, knowledge, and culture) had led the 'Gypsies' to be again regarded as 'degraded', and 'hereditary criminals'. In the newly united Germany, the Office for the Eradication of the Gypsy Nuisance was established and quickly grew to gathering huge amounts of data from the country and across Europe. By the dawn of the 20th century, eugenics as a science of 'race' and 'racial purity' (with the associated ideas of 'cleansing' ethnic groups as 'inferior') had been firmly established in academia, government, and society.

The European Context, c.1900 to 1939

The historian, Mark Mazower has called Europe at the beginning of the 20th century, "the dark continent", meaning that the nation-states that made up the region were driven not by notions of democracy, pluralism, modern scientific rationalism, and peaceful co-existence, but by authoritarian governments, autocracy, eugenic 'science', ethnic division, and insecurities built upon ideas about 'race', irrational hatred of others or xenophobia. The exploitation of materials, resources, and human beings in pursuit of enrichment of the few over the benefit of the many, was the governing principle in domestic and especially, foreign policies. Certainly, the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century saw conflicts between European nation-states and empires explode, in wars fought in their colonies (the first and second Boer Wars, 16th December 1880 until 23rd March 1881; 11th October 1899 until 31st May 1902, for example), and in Europe itself (the Balkan Wars, October 1912 and May 1913; the Great War, August 1914 until 11th November 1918), over competition to seize and control resources in 'spheres of influence' or expanded territories. Indigenous and native peoples in continental Africa, central and inner Asia, Polynesia and Micronesia, Indochina, China, the Middle East, and Far East (all European labels and descriptions) were defeated by British, French, German, Russian, and Belgian military forces, some even annihilated or exterminated in pursuit of European power and control. The European colonisation of the rest of the world, except where halted by other non-European imperial expansion such as the United States or Japan in this period, was pursued relentlessly.

Such competition between colonisers and imperial powers led ultimately and inevitably to the conflagration of the First World War (August 1914 to November 1918), but the peripheries of Europe had seen brutal wars fought based on ethnic nationalism and separation of peoples along linguistic, religious, and 'racial' boundaries into individual polities and states, from the turn-of-the-century onwards. South-eastern Europe under the Ottomans ruling from Constantinople, and the Habsburgs ruling from Vienna and Budapest, was in constant turmoil as parts of each empire broke away, often with external support from other European states, as was the case with Russia in the Balkans against the Ottoman Turks, supporting Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria, and newly unified Rumania. Austro-Hungary faced truculent resistance and rebellion from Croats, Serbs, Montenegrins, Albanians, and Transylvanian populations seeking to establish, often in contradistinction to each other, discreet, ethnically homogeneous political units, rationalised through frequently 'imaginary' linguistic and 'racial' boundaries.

Figure 28: "Germany, the beautiful travel country." Coloured pictorial map on sheet 59x82, folded into 22.5x10.5, with inset map of Europe showing location of Nazi Germany, promoting tourism. Showing major cities, historical people and places, places of interest, agriculture, industry, sports, Berlin and 1936 Olympic Games. Nazi flags in Nuremberg Munich and Obersalzburg. On verso: Map of Germany, showing roads and railways, inset map of air routes, and 12 pages of text and tourist information. Date estimated, but issued in other languages. See: www.davidrumsey.com. #8587.000 (Italian), and 8880.003 (German). Includes decorative border and compass rose. Relief shown pictorially and by contours.

Figure 29:"Germany, Germany", Coloured pictorial map on sheet 59x82, folded into 22.5x10.5, with inset map of Europe showing location of Nazi Germany, promoting tourism. Showing major cities, historical people and places, places of interest, agriculture, industry, sports, Berlin and 1936 Olympic Games. Nazi flags in Nuremberg Munich and Obersalzburg. On verso: Map of Germany, showing roads and railways, inset map of air routes, and 12 pages of text and tourist information. Date estimated, but issued in other languages. See: www.davidrumsey.com. #8587.000 (Italian), and 8880.003 (German). Includes decorative border and compass rose. Relief shown pictorially and by contours.

The Roma and Sinti in Europe, c.1900 to 1939

The beginnings of the Romani *Porrajmos* can be seen in the last years of the 19th century development of eugenics, and policies adopted by German and other European governments towards Romani and Traveller peoples. In the 1880s, the Chancellor, von Bismarck, addressed the question of anti-Gypsy (*Zigeuner*) laws across the various German states and regions, in an attempt to both strengthen and rationalise them. Karl Andree (20th October 1808 to 10th August 1875), a geographer and founder of *Globus*, a geographical periodical (1862), held openly racist views of anthropology. Whilst his opinions were widely shared in Germany and Europe at the time, his advocating of the extermination of all 'native' peoples who stood in the way of German expansion into colonies and European expansion in general, during the 1880's included the 'Gypsies' amongst those he considered 'natural' (i.e., indigenous). This laid the foundations for the later eugenicist policies enacted towards Roma and Sinti. By 1899, the regional government of Bavaria had created a *Gypsy Affairs Section*, in Munich under Alfred Diller, that gathered records of all criminal cases involving Roma and Sinti and collated them with records of 'Gypsy' families across the unified German Reich, before sharing this data with other regional governments and law enforcement. Diller's own work had made clear his perceptions of *Zigeuner* ('Gypsies') as "a plague", in the title of his book of 1905.

Diller was not the first German author to address the topic of the 'Gypsies'; the writer, Heinrich Moritz Gottleib Grellmann (1756 to 1804), was one of the most influential scholars in the development of a German and European corpus of ideas (a collected group, or body of ideas), of the Romani people. His book, *Die Zigeuner. Ein historischer Versuch über die Lebensart und Verfassung, Sitten und Schicksale dieses Volks in Europa, nebst ihrem Ursprunge,* ('The Gypsies. A[n] historical essay on the way of life and constitution, customs, and destinies of this people in Europe, together with their origin') was published in Dessau (Leipzig) in 1783 and reprinted many times in the last years of the 18th, and first years of the 19th centuries. His discussion of the Indian origins of the Romani language was based on earlier (unacknowledged) work by other scholars, as Romani linguistics professor Ian Hancock has pointed out. Grellman described 'Gypsies' as descendants of Indian "pariah" (outcast) groups, criminals, "ineducable" (unwilling to be schooled), uncivilised, and therefore "inferior" as a 'race'. In 1787 (the year the second edition of Heinrich Grellmann's book was published), Georg Jacob Schäffer, a jurist and criminologist, compiled the *Sulzer Zigeunerlist* ('Sulz Gypsy List'). The "Gypsy List" contained names and descriptions of alleged 'Gypsy' criminals and was intended as an instrument of control and suppression of those increasingly perceived as a threat to German social order.

Other European authors had also written about 'Gypsies', their works having an enormous impact upon later German (and wider European) thinking and policy. Martin Zippel, a Lutheran *pastor* (priest) wrote about the language of the German Sinti people, whilst comparing them to "parasites" found on the bodies of animals. Other writers took up these themes in their works; Ferdinand Bischoff was a linguist who collected examples of the Romani language from 'Gypsy' (*Zigeuner*) prisoners, for use by criminologists and the police in their monitoring of Sinti and other groups. His work was prefaced by opinions that claimed a genetic component in 'Gypsy' criminality, comparing them to the German nation, who were well-ordered. Richard Leibich wrote in his 1863 book, *The Gypsies in Their Essentials and Their Language,* that 'Gypsies' were criminal by nature (e.g., biologically) and was first to coin the phrase, "lives unworthy of life", later used by others. Count Gobineau's *Essai sur Vinegalite des races humaines* ('Essays on the Inequality of Human Races', 1853–55), Cesare Lombroso's *L'uomo delinquente* ('Criminal Man', 1876), both predate Alfred Dillmann's 1905, *Zigeuner-Buck und die Zigeunerplage* ('Gypsy Book and the Gypsy plague'), and a volume that was to provide the basis for warped logic of the Final Solution, in Karl Binding and Alfred E. Hoche's arguments regarding eliminating "life unworthy of life" (*Permission to destroy lives unworthy of life*, 1920).

By the end of the 1920's, the office for monitoring 'Gypsies' had become a national bureau, part of the government of the Weimar Republic (1918 to 1933) that had replaced the German Reich with the collapse of the country, following defeat during the 'Great War' or First World War (1914 to 1918). In Munich, the *National Office for Gypsy Affairs* worked from 1929 onwards to gather more and more data about Roma and Sinti across the German states and shared such collated and collected information with near neighbours, such as Austria and France. Under Diller, the systematic recording of 3,350 Roma and Sinti, with personal data, physical measurements, and fingerprints, was carried out regardless of whether these Roma and Sinti people had committed any crime or not.

From their assumption of power in 1933, the National Socialist (Nazi) Party, under Hitler,

faced what they defined as the 'Gypsy question'. In September of that year, the first repression programmes against nomads and homeless individuals were begun. The Roma and Sinti were included in the category of *lebensunwertesleben*, taking up the ideas of Binding and Hoche and others, the so-called "life unworthy of life". In tandem with these measures, propaganda against the *Ziegeuner* ('Gypsies') intensified, using journalists and writers favourable to the Nazi Party, from the columns of newspapers and populist magazines. Many articles were published that presented Roma and Sinti as "criminal and asocial elements" in German society, reinforcing the ideas of Zippel, Bischoff, Leibich and Dillman, that 'Gypsies' are ineducable, "impossible to educate" in a 'civilised', modern state. One of the most frequent assertions and arguments was that 'Gypsies' were "distant from us [racially]", as they were, essentially an ancestral Asian population, recognising the work of Grellman and others who had traced the origins of Romani language and people to the Indian lands.

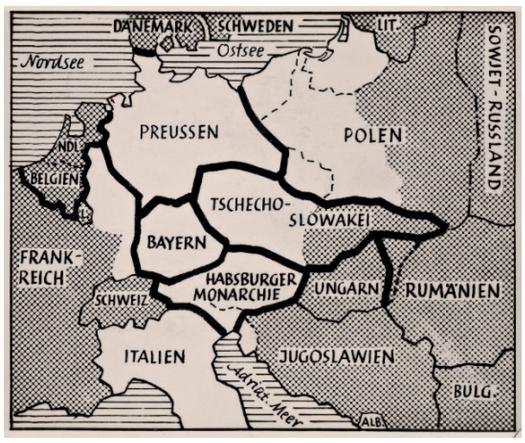


Figure 30: Nazi propaganda; "This is how the warmongers would divide Germany. This map is from a document found in Paris, showing one of the Franco-English war aims disclosed to American Secretary of State Sumner Welles by French Minister-President Reynaud." Photo by Heinrich Hoffmann

The *paradoxical* (a contradiction in terms) nature of the argument that Roma and Sinti were "distant from us" is to be found in the very assertion that they were from an ancestral Asian population. The origins of the *Aryan*, or *Indo-European,* peoples was the same as that of the Roma and Sinti peoples, as demonstrated by their language, a fact that was understood at the time. Nazi propaganda sought to obscure this through the distorted use of the term, *Asian*, implying that Roma and Sinti were not *Aryan*, but *Asiatic* – related to other, non–European peoples, such as the mediaeval Mongols, Tartars, and Turks (but avoiding reference to the Goths, Huns, and Vandals that had captured the western Roman Empire in the 5th century CE). The illogicality of such claims, and those related to spurious notions of descent from the central Asian nomadic warriors and from ancient Germanic peoples migrating from Scandinavia, were 'woven' into numerous attempts to link modern German populations with 'heroic' or even semi-divine

groups and individuals. Fascism sought not to demonstrate 'proof' of biological relationships but boast of legendary connections, in the same way that ancient and mediaeval sagas and epics had done, centuries before.

Nazi dominated culture also had to make the same connections, and in this fashion the music of Wagner, such as the *Ring Cycle*, was incorporated, co-opting Norse *edda* (epic poetry cycles) and legends into a Nazi 'Germanic' *mythos* (a set of stories, usually loosely interconnected, that attempt to build a 'worldview', or fictional universe). Scandinavian legends around gods and goddesses were also incorporated, whilst the emphasis upon German folk-stories, such as those collected by the Brothers Grimm, were also selected as part of this cultural 'map' of the Germanic peoples. Art in form and function had to also be 'purged' of its 'impurities' that stemmed from Jewish influences upon modernism, judged to be 'degenerate' by Hitler himself, often. The ancient Greek and Roman sculptures were to be taken as models of purity, free from Jewish degradation. In July 1937, two exhibitions contrasted the 'degenerate art' of the former (the Degenerate Art Exhibition), and the approved "Great German Art Exhibition" (*Grosser Deutsche Kuntsausstellung*) held in the Palace of German Art. The first exhibition was chaotic and deliberately labelled to incite hostility, the second self-celebratory and pompous in its exalted claims.

The infamous two Nuremburg Laws of 15th September 1935, the *Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honour,* and the *Reich Citizenship Law* were passed to bar marriage and relationships between German people and others considered 'impure' and 'inferior' to 'Aryan' Germans, in the first case, primarily Jewish people, but extended to others such as 'Gypsies'; and the second to prohibit anyone not of 'pure German blood' (Jewish and Romani peoples), the right to German citizenship. The notions of 'racial purity' were built upon the ideas of *eugenics* and 'racial science' that claimed that biologically different 'races' of human beings existed – they do not, as *all* human beings are one species, in scientific and evolutionary terms – and that separation of human beings was biologically measurable – it is not, as all human beings share the same biological organs, fluids, and autonomic and responsive functions (nervous system). These laws were passed during the period of the Nazi Party's rallies held in Nuremburg in September 1935, but not brought into force until after the Olympic Games had been held in Berlin in the summer of 1936, out of foreign policy considerations – the Nazis did not want to have other governments boycott the Games as a protest against the discriminatory legal measures. Latterly, the *Rassenhygienische Forschungsstelle* (the Racial Hygiene Research Centre), issued a circular, *Bekämpfung der Zigeunerplage, Reichszentrale zur Bekämpfung des Zigeunerunwesens* ('Combatting the Gypsy Plague, the Reichs Central Office for the Gypsy Nuisance') under *Reichsfürer* Heinrich Himmler of the *Schutzstaffel* (SS), the 'Protection Squadron', and Chief of Nazi German police, on the 8th December 1938. The 'Circular' was the result of cooperation between the three organisations, the Racial Hygiene Centre, the SS, and the German Criminal Police Office. It instructed local police to arrest all persons who had been 'labelled' (registered previously by police), as 'Gypsy' (*Zigeuner*), or "half-bred Gypsy" (*Zigeunermischlinge*), or "... those who roamed about in a Gypsy way", creating new cards that would be registered with the Racial Hygiene Examination Office (a part of the Research Centre), who would also examine those arrested Roma and Sinti as "racially biological" specimens.

The results, from the employees of the Racial Hygiene Examination Office, would be recorded as 'expert' opinions that carried legal weight in defining who was, and who was not, *Zigeuner* ('Gypsy'). Dr Robert Ritter and his assistant, Eve Justin, were instrumental in this latter collection of data and measurements of Roma and Sinti. Justin was known as "Loli Cheja", or the 'Red Headed-Girl', by the 'Gypsies', as she would arrive in encampments and roadside stopping places with sweets and treats for the children, before beginning her measuring of skulls and bodies. Ritter was more formal and detached, usually collecting data and measurements in the company of police officers; a much more frightening prospect for the Sinti and Roma who were the object of his studies. This data was never destroyed and became the basis for the work of INTERPOL, the European police agency that continued the same practices and policies for decades following the genocide.

The Road to the Porrajmos, 1939 to 1942

In the Nazi 'racial' state, notions of biologically defined racism were very prevalent, part-and-parcel of the ideology of the political and social system operating in Nazi Germany and other fascist states (Spain and Italy for example), from the early 1920's to 1945. These ideas, and the legislation, policies and practices they engendered, ensured that minority ethnic communities, the Jews, and Roma and Sinti particularly, were defined as 'inferior races', biologically 'contaminated' and therefore a 'menace' to the wider social order, the majority population, that must be eradicated, like a disease or infection. In this way, Roma and Sinti people became less-than-human, or *weniger als menschlich*, as it was written in many German pamphlets and 'scientific' monographs of the period. With these steps (and others connected to the promulgation – the passing of laws, their ratification, and incorporation into German daily life - of 'racial hygiene' measures

against the Jews and 'Gypsies'), the impetus for the destruction of Germany's Roma and Sinti population was firmly set.

With the 1939 "Settlement Edict", issued by the Chief of Reich Security Main Office, Reinhard Tristan Eugen Heydrich (7th March 1904 to 4th June 1942), attempts were made to keep Roma and Sinti under direct state control through prohibiting any movement and forcing 'Gypsies' to reside in limited zones or residential camps, similar to the Jewish ghettos. These were defined as being on the outskirts of any city. Following the declaration of war by the Nazis in September 1939, Poland was swiftly (*Blitzkrieg*) invaded and occupied. Mass deportations of German and Austrian Sinti and Roma to Polish territory were initiated in April of 1940, following an earlier plan to use the Lodz and Warsaw ghettos. Finally, as with the Jews, the design of physical annihilation made its way to the forefront of Nazi policy.. In December 1942, Himmler ordered the internment in the extermination camps of all the Gypsies of the Reich, including those of mixed blood, *It was the final solution* for the Roma and Sinti people..

Figure 32: At a general membership meeting of the NSDAP in Krakow, General Governor and Reichs Minister Dr. Frank, announced that, by decision of the Führer, the General Government (of Poland) would cease to be treated as an occupied territory, and instead become a part of the Greater German Reich, c.1940, photo Heinrich Hoffmann

Sinti and Roma in German Society: a short history of Johann 'Rukeli' Trollman

Figure 33: Roma man writing "Romany" and "Gypsy" on a blackboard; Alexander Alland, c.1938

Many Roma and Sinti in Nazi Germany (1933 to 1945) had been part of wider German society for generations; some had even achieved a degree of success in particular fields, such as Johann Wilhelm Trollmann (27th December 1907 – April 1944), also nicknamed *Rukeli*, from a Romani word for 'tree', a middleweight boxer from 1929, champion from 1933, and a Sinti. He was celebrated in much the same way as Tyson Fury is today, recognised for his sporting achievements in a national context. Johann Trollman, under the Nazi regime, was stripped of his championship status and titles a few days after his win and expelled from the German Boxing Association in 1935, following the passing of the Nuremburg Laws. He was afterwards forced to fight, "in the German way" (e.g., standing still, toe-to-toe with his opponent), with dyed hair and skin powdered white. From 1933 to 1935, he had been fighting, but his boxing style was based on fluid movement and using the space in the ring (much as later boxers, such as Muhammad Ali would perfect), so being forced to fight standing still, after 1935 caused him to lose matches. Being expelled from the Boxing Association meant he was reduced to fighting at fairgrounds and in illegal matches.

Trollmann married in 1935, with Olga Bilda and they had one daughter. He was conscripted into the *Wermacht*, the German Army, in September 1939, as the Nazis launched their assault on Poland and began the Second World War, until he was discharged on grounds of 'racial hygiene', and lived a fearful, twilight existence until he was captured, interned and deported to the Neuengamme concentration camp (near Hamburg), in 1942. He was involved in an act of Romani resistance sometime in August 1944 and was shot to death by camp guards at the Wittenberge sub-camp, his body incinerated. It is not known what happened to his wife and daughter.

Other Roma and Sinti in Germany, and elsewhere in fascist Europe, at this time had been pursuing traditional occupations as entertainers, musicians (especially in dance halls and beer *kellers* or cellars), circus entertainers, fortune-tellers in the markets and cafes, horse-dealers in rural regions, and blacksmiths. Many Sinti communities were settled, or at least partially sedentary, only taking the roads and byways during the summer months (usually the traditional St George's Day, 5th May to the autumn equinox). Some had, indeed become permanently settled and were 'integrated' (slowly assimilated) with German society; many had served with the German army in the previous war (1914 to 1918), though all those who had, were stripped of status as veterans, rank, and honours (such as commendations for bravery, or medals) by the Nazi Regime after 1935 and interred, deported, and eventually murdered in the concentration and death camps.

Figure 34: Douglas and Elizabeth Hern and their eight children, at Bala on their way to Swansea, 22 June 1951

Walter S. Winter “But the comparisons are useless. It wasn’t worse for one group or another. We had the same pain...”

Walter Stanoski Winter was born into the Sinti community in Germany in June 1919, one of nine children, where his family had lived for many generations. The Sinti are a Romani community that are spread from Germany, through Austria and Switzerland, northern Italy, and eastern France. Many Roma consider Gypsies in the U.K. to be Sinti, despite their own use of *Romanichals* to distinguish themselves, much as Sinti do from Roma. Walter Winter came from a large family of eight children, living in Wittmund, north-eastern Germany, where their ancestors had settled two centuries previously. ‘Settled’ though was a state of mind, rather than a permanent condition, as the family took to the roads in summers with the funfair, as ‘Showpeople’, and the autumns spent picking agricultural crops. As a boy, Walter had an important act in the family circus, leaping on and off a fast moving horse. But the family had faced discrimination and persecution from German people around them and from the police. On occasions the latter would ‘move them on’, roughly handling the adults and smacking the children if they didn’t pack up fast enough.

“There is a tradition of persecuting the Sinti. Always, always... We are tough because we have had to be...”

The family owned a house, where they resided during the colder months, and the children attended school, sometimes staying with the teacher when their parents had to ‘go on the road’. In 1933, when the Nazi party came to power, Walter’s family learned to stop using Romanës (Romani language) in public, as it quickly identified them as *Zigeuner* (Gypsy). Walter’s brothers were summarily ejected from the football club where they played, and Walter himself was forced to resign his commission in the navy. In 1936 the Nuremberg ‘racial hygiene laws’ came into force, discriminating legally against the Roma and Sinti in Germany, in terms of removing their rights as citizens. By 1938, the notorious circular issued by Heinrich Himmler, *Combating the Gypsy Nuisance*, was enforced and the road to the *Porrajmos* was clearly laid out in the warped logic of the Nazis.

In 1943, Winter and two of his siblings were transported to the *Zigeunerfamilienlager* (Gypsy family) Camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau II.. His sister Maria’s eight-year-old twin daughters died after being experimented upon by the so-callled, Angel of Death, Dr Josef Mengele. Walter Winter’s first wife, Anna, also perished along with their new-born child when they were removed from Auschwitz and transported to Ravensbruck camp, later that year. Eric Winter, Walter’s brother was sterilised as part of the experiments carried out on Roma and Sinti people at Auschwitz. His brother and sister had been arrrested by the police, when they were living in a town some distance from their parents and other siblings. Walter Winter was arrested when he went to find out what happened. The remainder of the family were able to hide from arrest and were given protection by sympathetic officials in the region, demonstrating that not all Germans approved of the measures against Roma and Sinti. Because of perceived differences in treatment, the debate about suffering between Jewish people and Romani people continues, despite the ‘zero-sum’ exercise it ultimately becomes. “Seeing family suffer could be even harder than being separated from them. But the comparisons are useless. It wasn’t worse for one group or another. We had the same pain.” Walter Winter is in no doubt that these ‘competitions’ over numbers are an appalling way to look at the impact of the Holocaust on both communities.

Walter Winter's book, *Winter Time: Memoirs of a German Sinti who Survived Auschwitz* (2004), published by University of Hertfordshire Press, is one of a very few such accounts of what happened to Roma and Sinti in the death camps, largely due to the shame and guilt felt by survivors. The Sinti and Roma were not well educated in 1930's Germany, frequently ostracised and excluded from local schools and they remained, as they had been for centuries, an oral culture, not a literary one. Romani communities across Europe well into the 1960's were 'outsiders' in the mass education systems of nation-states, reliant upon their own traditions and story-telling to pass on culture, wisdom, and knowledge from the general community's long experience of living amongst the gadje. As skilled mechanics, carpenters, electricians, sign-painters, and fairground folk, the Winters had maintained their own, in-community learning and knowledge transmission, despite being largely barred from formal education.

The million Sinti and Roma who lived in pre-war Germany were largely eradicated in the most brutal fashion, through extermination in the death camps, but also in the forests in mass murders involving not just the SS or police; locals were also part-and-parcel of these 'Gypsy round-ups' and 'Gypsy hunts' that repeated the earlier, 18th century practices of lords and princes in the German lands. In the remainder of the Nazi occupied, or Allied Territories, Walter Winter says that almost all were destroyed by 1945, generations upon generations wiped out and whole communities decimated. He disagrees with academics and researchers who argue over numbers saying, "All of them have it wrong." In his estimation, almost two million Roma, Sinti, Manouche, Woonwagenbewoners, Tartare, Ashkali, Egyptians, Yenische, and Yifti were exterminated, but the evidence has been lost, deliberately or otherwise. He supported the recognition of the "forgotten Holocaust", a phrase that he coined in his writings, and the establishment of a memorial in Berlin that took many years but is now in place. However, unlike other Roma who advocate for a Romanistan, a 'homeland' for the Romani people, Walter Winter disagrees, saying he is still a German; perhaps surprising in one who suffered so much at the hands of other Germans...

Walter Stanoski Winter died in November 2012; this text is partly based upon an interview by Emma Brockes in the Guardian newspaper, 29th November 2004, and on Walter Winter's own words from his book, 2004.

Figure 35::
Auschwitz survivor Walter Stanoski Winter died on the 19th November 2012 in Hamburg. He was born on the 19th June 1919 in Wittmund.

Sofia Taikon – "We mustn't talk about such things, we'll make our children sad..."

Sofia Taikon was a Roma woman who, with her family, were arrested in the winter of 1942, in Poland where they were hiding in the woodlands. They arrived in Auschwitz-Birkenau II, *Zigeunerfamilienlager* (Gypsy family camp) in March 1943, assigned to one of the thirty barracks that housed some 23,000 Roma, Sinti, *Manouche, Woonwagenbewoners, Yensiche, Romungro, Kalderash, Lovari,* and other Romani people defined as *Zigeuner* (Gypsies) by the Nazis and their allies.

Sofia survived because she was young, healthy, and could work hard in the factories attached to the camp (Auschwitz-Birkenau III) that were organised by German manufacturers such as Krupps, Magirus-Deutz, Erla Maschinenwerk GmbH, and Topf & Sons (who built the crematoria ovens used in the Holocaust). However, her health was ruined as a result of the experience of the death camps and factories, and left her disabled as a result of injuries sustained from mistreatment by SS guards.

Sofia was taken to Sweden in spring 1945, with the Swedish Red Cross 'white busses' that rescued some 15,000 camp internees and survivors. In 1962, after living with a Swedish family in Jönköping from October 1945, Sofia married Janko and raised a happy family.

She wrote the graphic memoir, *Sofia Z-4515* (Mantra Lingua, 2012) just before she died in 2005, and was worried that the record of her experiences was "...too horrible". "Have we concentrated too much on evil and on dreadful people?", she asked her coauthors and illustrator.

"Unfortunately, the world is neither just nor good, but there are good and just people in it. There are people who are against persecuting others, even when they themselves are threatened. They may have no power, but they are brave. It is thanks to people like them that I am alive..."

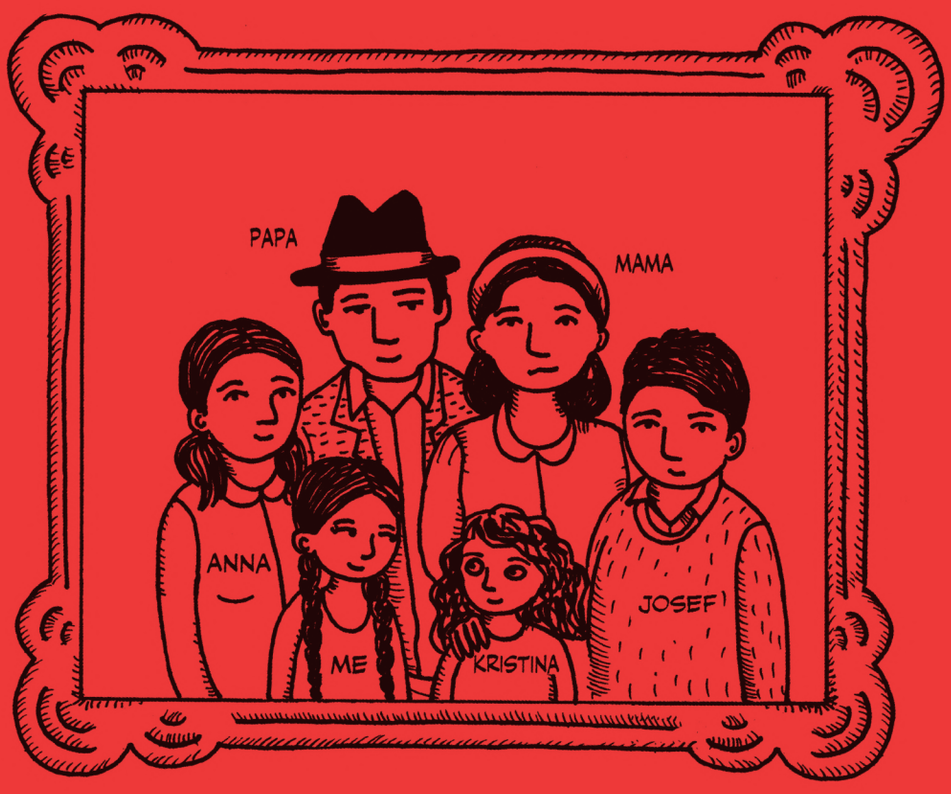


Figure 36:
Sofia Taikon family portrait

Charlie Smith, "Up the Chimneys" (Auschwitz)

Charlie Smith was an activist, antiquarian, and local authority councillor in Essex, England for many years. He was also the long-standing Chairperson of the (then) *Gypsy Council for Education, Culture, and Welfare*, representing Gypsies, Travellers and, latterly, east European Roma, in England and Wales. The Gypsy Council grew out of the activism of the late 1960's around Romani rights, particularly related to caravan dwellings, and the impetus generated by the 1st World Romani Congress of 1971, held near London (in Orpington, Kent). Still in existence, though radically altered by the changing context of Gypsy, Roma, Traveller rights and politics, the Gypsy Council maintains a presence in England as the longest, continuously operating Romani organisation in England.

Under Charlie Smith's leadership, reclaiming the term 'Gypsy' was a primary aim of the Gypsy Council, following the example of the USA civil rights' movement steps to claim terms such as 'Black', 'Queer', and 'GAY' (Good As You), and education about the "forgotten holocaust" of the Roma and Sinti was pursued actively, with some of the earliest events to mark Holocaust Memorial Day (27th January) being supported by the Gypsy Council and its members, particularly in London primary schools. Charlie Smith felt especially passionate about the education of young Gypsies and Travellers regarding the Romani Holocaust, and wrote this poem:

Up the chimneys went the Rom –
With them they thought their story gone.
The dust if flew around the earth,
In the rains it settled on turf;
Although the smoke has now gone
In the wind you can hear their song.
But our youth now the story will be told,
The gorgios' lies will then unfold
And the Gypsy flower grow more bold...

*gorgios meaning 'non-Gypsy'

Figure 37:
Auschwitz
(Railtrack Approach)

Ceija Stojka "They devoured us..."

A Roma child survivor of the Romani *Porrajmos* in Auschwitz Birkenau II *Zigeunerfamilienlager* (Gypsy family camp), Ceija Stojka was a small girl from a *Lovara* Romani family in Vienna, Austria when the Second World War (1939 to 1945) broke out. Stojka was born in Kraubath an der Mur, Styria, in 1933 and was the fifth of six children. Her mother was Maria "Sidi" Rigo Stojka, and her father was Karl "Wackar" Horvath. Two of her brothers, Karl "Karli" Stojka and Johann "Mongo" Stojka, were also writers and musicians.

The family were Roman Catholic, members of the *Bagareschtschi vitsa* (clan) on their father's side and *Giletschi* clan on their mother's side. The Stojkas were horse-traders living in a caravan during winters in Vienna, and summers travelling through the Austrian countryside, where the family could trace their heritage for over 200 years.

Together with some of her family, she survived the Romani Holocaust and internment at Auschwitz-Birkenau II, Ravensbruck, and Bergen-Belsen. Her father was sent to the Dachau concentration camp, then to Schloss Hartheim, where he was killed. Her youngest brother Ossi died in the *Zigunerfamillienlager* at Auschwitz-Birkenau II in 1943. Stojka, her mother, and sisters were freed by the British army (in which many Gypsies and Travellers served), from Bergen-Belsen in 1945 and they returned to Vienna. Ceija began school at the age of twelve in the second grade.

Stojka had two children, a son in 1949 and a daughter in 1951. Her son Jano, a jazz musician, died in 1979. She earned her livelihood selling fabric door-to-door, as well as rugs at markets until 1984. Later, she lived in Vienna as a writer, painter, singer, and public speaker. In 1992, she became the Austrian spokeswoman for the recognition of the Roma and Sinti genocide, *Porrajmos*, along with being a voice in the struggle against discrimination that the Roma and Sinti continue to suffer throughout Europe. She died in Vienna in 2013 at the age of 79.

Figure 38:
Ceija Stojka, "The final destruction of the 'Gypsy family camp,' Auschwitz, 1944" gouache on paper, 2011, Vienna Museum

Endauflösung von Auschwitz 1944 August

Figure 39:
Clifford and Lias, sons of Oliver

Figure 40:
Oliver Lee
May 1913, Llangollen

The Mechanisation of Marginalisation and Death

As the destruction of Germany's Sinti and Roma intensified after 1942, the *Schutzstaffel* (SS) proceeded to round-up, arrest and deport thousands of *Zigeuner* 'Gypsies'. The residential camps and zones, in Marzahn near Berlin, Cologne, Frankfurt am Main, Stuttgart, and Magdeburg, where Sinti and Roma had been catalogued, documented, and imprisoned, made it relatively easy for the process of deportation to the concentration and death camps. Tragically, the Sinti and Roma often greeted their executioners with the Nazi salute, perhaps believing that this would save them. However, the persecution and destruction of the Roma and Sinti (and other, related Romani and Traveller communities) was genocide, mass murder, and the attempted extermination of an entire ethnic community, or related communities of people, based upon external notions of their 'racial' identity, what we would now call their culture, traditions, languages, histories, and patterns of migration through time and across space and landscape.

Figure 41: Roma group gathered around a table; King Kaslof at right; Alexander Alland, c.1938

The photographs of columns of Sinti, Roma, and other 'Gypsies' captured by the German army marching and carrying their few possessions, towards the transit sites are part of the recorded imagery of the *Porrajmos*. Others show horse-drawn Sinti and Roma waggons in convoys, escorted through German and Austrian cities by police and armed gendarmes, or long lines of Romani men, women, and children marching towards the cattle trucks that were attached to trains, to take them to the concentration and extermination camps in German and Polish territories. As the *Wermacht*, the German army expanded and occupied much of Europe, these countries also saw their communities of 'Gypsies' exterminated: *Manouche* in France, *Woonwagenbewoners* in the Netherlands, *Sinti* and *Yenische* in Italy (after the collapse of dictator Benito Mussolini's personal rule, and the German occupation of parts of the country), the Roma, *Ashkali,* and *Egyptians* in south-eastern Europe (see the special section on this region).

'Gypsies' were interned in concentration camps under somewhat differing conditions than other prisoners; for example, they were, in some cases, not subjected to the same selection processes as Jews, separated by gender and age, and lived in united family groups. This was not kindness on the part of the Nazi camp authorities and commanders, as they realised that they were unmanageable otherwise. The Sinti and Roma were also, in some camps, not forced to wear the distinctive striped uniform of inmates, so frequently seen in photographs of Jewish internees, though the claims that their heads were not shaved is not supported by the evidence, at least in the case of adult Sinti and Roma. In many camps, such as in Auschwitz, Buchenwald and Lackenbach, there were even Romani orchestras of former musicians; these often accompanied Roma and Sinti on their way to the gas chambers. They often wore a brown triangle, a dark red square, or the black triangle identified with *asocials* (in the warped vision of the Nazi ideologues), pinned or sewn to their clothes. Unlike the Star of David for Jewish concentration camp prisoners, it is not always clear what these distinctive insignia meant, but in most cases the letter Z, initial of *Zigeuner,* was tattooed on their arm to identify Sinti and Roma prisoners and remained an indelible marker for the survivors, a reminder of the horrors they had undergone.

'Gypsies' died by the many hundreds of thousands, often from hunger, the effects of forced labour in highly abusive and dangerous conditions, and diseases that spread through the crowded and insalubrious camps; outbreaks of dysentery, septicaemia (blood poisoning from untreated or infected wounds), and gangrene, influenza, typhus, and tuberculosis (TB) also carried off large numbers of Sinti and Roma in camps. In particular cases, experiments to see how long human beings could survive on seawater (Dachau), or how long it took for poisoned milk to kill children (Lackenbach), were carried out on the Sinti and Roma. The experiments on the mass sterilisation of 'Gypsy' girls and women, through high level x-rays, was carried out at Ravensbrück and at Auschwitz-Birkenau II concentration camps, in the early months of 1943, before being abandoned as a 'solution to the Gypsy problem' that was too costly and time consuming. The infamous Dr Josef Mengele, the 'Angel of Death' first carried out experiments upon *Zigeuner* children, beginning May 1943, at the family camp in *kindergartens* set up in Blocks 29 and 31, whilst keeping a small Sinti boy in his quarters, dressing him in 'traditional' outfits and hats, before finally consigning him to the gas chambers in August 1944. Mengele

specialised in experiments upon Roma and Sinti twins from May 1943, all under six-years-old. Many other doctors, such as Carl Clauberg, used Roma and Sinti prisoners for experiments in Block 10, next to the punishment block, 11.

The Auschwitz-Birkenau II camp, with its crematoria (II to V), and *Zigeunerfamilienlager*, or *Bauabschnitt IIe* 'Gypsy family camp', was the largest of the extermination camps used by the Germans to mass murder Sinti and Roma. Auschwitz had three major camps (Auschwitz I, Auschwitz-Birkenau II, Auschwitz-Monowitz III), five crematoria (one in Auschwitz I, four in Auschwitz II), and numerous (28) sub-camps, many attached to industrial production (such as the IG Farben factory and camp, the Seimens factory and camp, and the Krupp factory and camp). Sinti and Roma were kept separately in the camp for 'Gypsies' organised around thirty-one 'barrack blocks' that housed approximately 23,946 (20,946 were registered prisoners, 3,000 or so were unregistered) Sinti and Roma of all ages, some 21,000 of whom died. On some occasions Sinti and Roma were gassed directly upon arrival, as on 22nd March (1,700) and 25th May 1943 (1,035), when transports containing *Bergitka* Roma and Sinti, from Poland, who were all ill with an unrecorded virus (probably typhus), were murdered upon arrival at Auschwitz-Birkenau II.

This is the site of two important events in the Romani *Porrajmos*, when on 16th May 1944 the *Waffen-SS* units, attached to the camps, attempted to liquidate the *Zigeunerfamilienlager (Gypsy Family Camp)'* but were repulsed by Roma and Sintis' wielding knives, metal pipes, and other 'found' weapons. This has become known and commemorated as *Roma Resistance Day,* in the international Romani rights community. Sadly, the SS later removed 2,908 Roma and Sinti from the camp, transferring them to 'work camps' (the industrial camps), before the night of the 2nd and 3rd August 1944, when 2,897 were taken to the gas chambers and then incinerated in the crematoria II-V. Those who refused to enter the gas chambers were shot or attacked by guard dogs; most were told they were being 'disinfected' or were being showered before medical examinations. Once inside the chambers, some underground, the doors were locked and the Zyklon-B gas pellets were delivered to the chambers by staff of the Racial Hygiene Institute (the same organisation that had carried out surveys of the 'Gypsies' in 1938), whilst *Waffen-SS* officers actually carried out the gassing of prisoners. The gas took between 10 and 20 minutes to be effective. The 2nd and 3rd August each year is remembered as *Kaló Memoriano Dives*, Black Memorial Day, by Roma and Sinti, often with commemorations at Auschwitz-Birkenau II *Zigeunerfamilienlager (Gypsy Family Camp)'* itself.

Figure 42: Roma children eating baked beans; Alexander Alland, c.1938

When it became apparent to the camps commandant Rudolf Höss (27th April 1940 to 11th November 1943; 8th May 1944 to 29th July 1944), and staff that were heads of the other camps (Josef Kramer, 15th May 1944 to January 1945; Heinrich Schwarz, November 1943 to January 1945), that the Soviet Red Army were close to liberating the camps at Auschwitz in January 1945, any remaining prisoners were ordered to be eradicated and all records and remains hidden, destroyed, or shipped to Germany. The 10,000 or so *Zigeuner* 'Gypsies' that are otherwise unaccounted for in the Auschwitz records, *Hauptbücher,* may have perished at this time, in the chaotic last days.

The extermination of the Roma, Sinti and other 'Gypsies' was carried out across the territories occupied by the Nazis. In Poland, families were massacred in their camps in the woodland where they sought refuge. In Volhynia, over 4,000 Sinti and Roma were massacred by *enzatsgrüppen* or 'specialist groups' of *SS* commandos ordered to carry out such on-the-spot massacres. In Slovakia, fascist militia (the *Hlinka* Guards Emergency Divisions), would round-up Roma, lock them up in huts, which were then set on fire. Mass shootings and executions were carried out across the Ukraine by local fascists. In the abortive attempt to invade Russia and Crimea, over 8,000 'Gypsies' were killed on the night of 24th December 1941 at Simferopol. In Croatia, the *Uštica* carried out massacres against the Roma and *Beyash* peoples, killing Romani children by smashing them against trees and walls to save ammunition. Many Roma were crushed by the *Wermacht* tanks driving over their tents in encampments. In Rumania, the fascist leader Ion Antonescu ordered the deportation of approximately 40,000 *Kalderash* and *Lovari* Roma, from the country to the occupied territory of Transnistria or Trans-Dniester (modern-day Moldova and western Ukraine) in 1942. Many died from the forced march or the conditions in which they were forced to live once there (see the special section on south-eastern Europe)

Concentration camps for Roma and Sinti (and other related groups) were also established, whether by order of the German Reich or by fascist regimes, in all the allied or occupied territories. The Lety camp in Bohemia, and Hodonin camp in Moravia (the modern Czech Republic); Kremnicka (near Banska Bystrica) in Slovakia; Mezökövesd in Hungary; Kaiserwald in Lithuania. The largest number of Romani deaths, outside of the Auschwitz-Birkenau II camp, were at the Logor Jasenovač Uštica camp in Croatia, described by Ante Ciliga as "this Balkan Auschwitz", where between 15,000 and 20,000 Roma were murdered. There were no crematoria at Jasenovač, which was an enormous series of camps spread over 210sq.km. and victims were brutally murdered in a variety of ways, including mobile gas vans. As at Auschwitz-Birkenau II, 'Gypsies' were separated by the *Uštica* into a 'special camp'.

In France, during the *Vichy* regime (collaborating with the Nazi occupied territories of much of occupied France), 30 or so concentration camps were built, such as Natzweiler-Struthof on the Vosges River (with a gas chamber and crematorium), Schirmeck in Alsace, Montreuil-Bellay, and Saliers near Arles, in which many *Mancouche* and *Tsigane* were incarcerated. Other Romani people in occupied France were exterminated on site, by the *Waffen-SS*. In Italy, there have been concentration camps such as that at Fossoli, Bolzano-Gries, Risiera di San Sabba in Trieste (the only one in Italy to have a crematorium), Teramo, Agnone (Isernia), Ferramonti di Tarsia (Cosenza), and one at Perdazdefogu in Sardinia. About 6,000 Roma and Sinti people were interned in 40 camps, of which approximately 1,000 died from poor sanitation, hunger, and diseases that spread quickly in the appalling conditions.

In the total of Roma dead, between 500,000 and 1,500,000, the picture of the complete destruction of some communities is hidden. In the Czech lands, the entire population of Roma were destroyed, despite being initially 'kept' by Heydrich, governor of these territories, as an anthropological exercise. When partisans assassinated him, the Roma and Sinti of Bohemia (such as the *Laleri*) and Moravia were deported and exterminated en masse. In the Baltic states, Roma populations of Lithuania (like the Jews there), Estonia (the *Layuse*), and Latvia were all eradicated. In Poland, the *Bergitka, Polska*, *Lovari*, and *Kalderash* were all decimated (from the Latin word meaning, one-in-ten), leaving only a tenth of the number that had lived in pre-war Poland. In the Crimea, the Roma population was almost entirely exterminated by *SS einsatzgrüppen* units, whilst in the Ukraine, *SS* units and local fascist militia wiped out many thousands of Roma. Across the Balkans, many communities were equally reduced (see special section). The total therefore is spread unevenly across the European population of Roma, Sinti, and other related groups, leaving none in some places and few in others. So many of the 'voices' of these families and individuals are 'lost' forever.

There have been non-Roma who saved some Roma and Sinti before they were sent to the extermination camps, even risking their own lives, in particular the Hungarian Baron György Rohonczy, of Burgenland. Like Oskar Schindler, he managed to convince the Nazis to take 130 Roma, originally form Austria, to use as labour on his estate near the Lackenbach camp in Burgenland. He then helped them escape across the Austrian border into Hungary, though whether they survived the fascist regime in that country is not known.

The post–Holocaust Romacide, 1945 to the present

The events that take place on the 27th January *Holocaust Memorial Day*, and the 2nd August, *Day of Roma and Sinti Remembrance*, commemorate the attempted extermination through mass murder, during the period of the Nazis' rule in Germany (1933 to 1945), of hundreds of thousands of Roma and Sinti, the two dominant groups of the Romani people in the German lands, and other Romani and Traveller communities across Europe. It was an event, which is called *O Baró Porrajmós* or "the Great Devouring" (in many Romani dialects), and Sa o *mudaripén* or Sa o *mudarimos*, literally "the murdering of us" (in other Romani and Sinti dialects), that marked out the 'Gypsies', like the Jews, as a 'race' to be eradicated in the concentration camps and through mass murder. It is a Holocaust that was ignored and even denied for a long time, following the Second World War; even today it is not well known and there are still people who deny that it happened. Numbers of Roma and Sinti dead are almost always underestimated (figures are given as 500,000 to 1,500,000), precisely because these individuals, families, and communities belonged to a population treated as marginal, despised, discriminated against, and the subject of a form of racism directed in particular towards Romani and Traveller peoples, called *anti-Gypsyism*. This is described as a particular form of racism that is directed at those communities perceived to be 'Gypsies' by wider society, that permeates (is present at every level) institutions, organisations, societies, structures of local and national government.

One of the consequences of this form of racism has been that Roma and Sinti are refused any expressions of human empathy, even the recognition of the atrocities they endured and suffered during the period 1939 to 1945. Such solidarity for Romani and Traveller victims of the Holocaust is generally absent, and this is clear when comments from public figures and even comedians can deride and belittle the suffering of these communities during this period, even expressing hatred through such statements about the Nazi state not murdering "enough" 'Gypsies', as has happened from populist and extremist political figures in countries such as France.

Roma and Sinti survivors of the Romani Holocaust have, over time, produced accounts of their terrible experiences during the period, when they were incarcerated in concentration camps and death camps, often as children with their families. Their testimonies were initially disbelieved, and they were cast off as liars; their personal accounts seen as 'stories' of little worth and value. In the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, these testimonies were denied any validity by state authorities and historians for many decades, discouraging any Roma or Sinti from speaking about their suffering in direct contrast to the experience of Jewish survivors of the Holocaust, or *Shoah* in Hebrew. As a result, the survivors of the Romani Holocaust grew wary and weary of being disbelieved, unwilling to share their accounts even within their own families.

Asked about the meaning of the tattoos on their arms, by their children or grandchildren, one Roma survivor, Sofia Taikon tells us that at first, she did not want to tell her own grandchildren about the tattoo and what it signified, but only did so after being repeatedly asked by them for the meaning of Z-4515 on her arm. Eventually, like many survivor accounts, hers was recorded by a non-Roma writer (Gunilla Lundgren) and made into an illustrated, graphic book by an artist (Amanda Eriksson, in both a Swedish and Romani language version), before other people could come to understand what had happened to this Roma woman and her parents, grandparents, and siblings. This process of Roma and Sinti testimonies being recorded by non-Romani writers and researchers before being published, is not uncommon, as the trauma to the Roma and Sinti communities and the families of survivors was and remains too great to deal with.

An anti-Gypsyism interpretation of the Romani Holocaust

O Baró Porrajmos as measures against an 'asocial' and 'criminal' population

The Nazi attempt to exterminate the Romani and Traveller peoples is becoming recognised as a terrible event in the overall history of the Nazi state's persecution of minority ethnic populations, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ people, political opponents of the Nazi regime, members of religious groups, and those with mental health challenges. However, some scholars, researchers, and even some organisations that carry out research and education activities about the wider Holocaust, have attempted to attribute the destruction of Europe's Roma and Sinti (and other 'Gypsy' communities) to measures against their alleged asocial and criminal natures, not to their ethnic and 'racial' characteristics. This approach both continues and reinforces stereotypes about 'Gypsies' that have been part of the descriptions about Romani and Traveller peoples for centuries in Europe and beyond (just as other minority ethnic communities have been stereotyped by European societies for centuries). These stereotypes about 'Gypsies' have become part of the particular form of racism, or *anti-Gypsyism,* that continues to impact upon Romani and Traveller peoples today.

Such an approach, based as it is in *anti-Gypsyism,* attempts to minimise and detract the suffering of Roma and Sinti communities across Nazi and occupied Europe 1936 to 1945, and devalues the *Porrajmos* of its direct ethnic and 'racial' content, lessening its perceived historical 'worth', and indirectly implying that it was not a legitimate event as such, differing from the experience of the Jewish communities in fascist and occupied Europe, 1936 to 1945. In this sense, *O Baró Porrajmos* becomes distorted, twisted out-of-shape, and disfigured by being seen, or perceived through the 'lens' of *anti-Gypsyism*, the particular form of racism directed towards those seen as 'Gypsies', both in the period during the Second World War, and afterwards, in the post-war reconstruction and settlement.

It has also had devastating effects on Roma and Sinti communities, families, and individuals' own psychology. Romani society was dismembered and dispersed (the reunification of surviving family members often took place after many years). Traditional rituals, customs, values, and even *taboos* (those acts that are culturally forbidden) were broken in order just to survive. Worst of all, the transmission of Romani culture and language was irretrievably broken by the generational gap created through elimination of the elders, traditional custodians of both and guarantors of Romani resolution and community justice systems. Romani identity and security around 'self' was shattered, leaving many Roma, Sinti, Gypsies, Travellers and others to deny their heritage and seek to 'pass' as non-Romani, or *gorgios* in the wider society.

Figure 43: A narrow boat run by 'ditch mumpers', or Bargees, River Lea, Edmonton Lock, London (2019). Britain's transport network during WW2 depended upon large numbers of Bargees transferring war materiel along canals and rivers, to supply the war economy, a contribution largely unrecognised following 1945. Photo Adrian Marsh

Fear and distrust of *gorgios* or *gadjé* (non-Romani) became profound, in the face of overwhelmingly negative experiences, not just at the hands of the Nazis but also by local villagers who handed them over, or fascist militia operating as allies of the Nazis in Hungary, Croatia, Rumania, Ukraine, Spain, and Italy. The Nazi persecution struck at the *Romanipé*, the Romani worldview and core of identity; Romani Rose, president of the Central Council of the German Sinti and Roma has spoken of this, "...understanding, our view of the world and our place in it has been distorted, trampled on and almost annihilated [as a result of the *Porrajmos*]."

Belated recognition of the Romani Holocaust, or Ó Baro Porrajmos

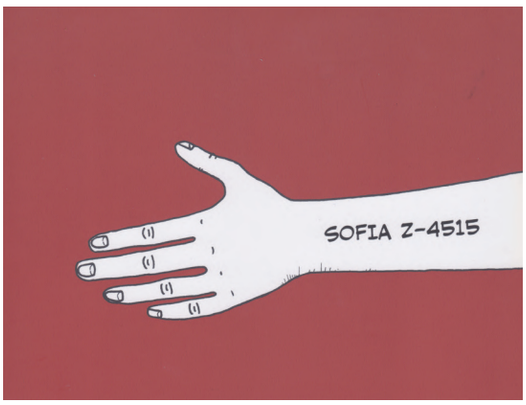


Figure 44: Sofia Taikon's testimony of tragedy, loss, and ultimately survival is one of the most moving and accessible personal stories of Roma resilience ever produced. Originally written in Swedish and Romanës, the graphic book was translated in 2012 into English, by Jana Elliot with an afterword, 'NO Gypsies Served' by Adrian Marsh. The original work was a partnership between Sofia, Gunilla Lundgren (writer), and Amanda Eriksson (artist).

On the 24th October 2012, the government of a reunified Germany officially recognised the Sinti and Roma suffering during the *Porrajmos*, by inaugurating a monument in the centre of Berlin. The ceremony included both the Chancellor, Angela Merkel, and the President of Germany, Joachim Gauck, together with leaders of the Roma and Sinti communities in Germany (Romani Rose) and across Europe. The monument itself was designed by an Israeli artist, Dani Karavan, and is located in the Tiergarten, close to the Reichstag (the German parliament). The monument, officially known as the *Memorial to the Sinti and Roma Victims of National Socialism*, has a stone triangle at its centre (recalling the brown badge worn by the 'Gypsy' inmates of Auschwitz-Birkenau II *Zigeunerfamilienlager*), with a fresh flower placed upon it each day, surrounded by a pool of still water (suggesting "annihilation", according to the artist), with a circular series of broken stones of differing sizes (some have the names of other extermination and concentration camps where Sinti and Roma died), representing the Sinti and Roma victims.

On the monument in bronze letters around the edge of the pool, is the poem *Auschwitz*, (although the poem commemorates all Sinti and Roma, not just those of the camp), written by the Roma poet Santino Spinelli;

Gaunt face
dead eyes
cold lips
quiet
a broken heart
out of breath
without words
no tears

The memorial itself was a very long time in being established, first proposed in 1992 by the then Federal government, only to be delayed by disputes over location and design. At the inauguration, the Central Council of the German Sinti and Roma, and the German Sinti Alliance were both represented by their presidents who had been active in the campaign to have a memorial established. Although the genocide of Sinti and Roma was first acknowledged by the German government in 1982, little political will to do anything other than a simple apology meant a thirty-year wait for the Memorial to be inaugurated, and whilst the state has now, belatedly done so, the reality of exclusion, *anti-Gypsyism*, assimilation, and xenophobia (especially with increasing government refusal to accept Roma refugees from countries in south-eastern, eastern, and central Europe where anti-Roma prejudice has led to violence and murder) remains for Sinti and Roma in Germany, and across an increasingly hostile Europe.

Romani responses to the Romani Holocaust (Porrajmos)

Poetry, song, and the arts as expressions of Romani people

The Romani people have frequently been at a loss when dealing with non-Romani violence and intolerance, resorting, like many others who feel powerless when confronted with overwhelming force of state institutions, to mobility. As a survival strategy it has worked for the last 1,000 years, and not just for Romani people or their ancestors of course. But the Roma, Sinti, Gypsies, and Travellers have sought to find security through traditional commercial mobility as a way of life for longer than any other community, relying upon a series of occupations that include creative expression and artistic endeavour. From an originally oral culture, Romani poetry has become written much the same as the transition, in the Balkans and Turkey, from sung epic poetry to printed poems in published volumes.

Performers and musicians too have improvised or composed repsonses to the death and destruction of the concentration camps, whilst Romani and Traveller artists have produced works that were born of the suffering or responses to the tragedy that overtook the Sinti and Roma, 1936 to 1945.

From *The Terror Years* by Rajko Djurić, trans. Julie Ebin

Our house is Auschwitz,
So big and black. So black and big.
Petals of skulls are hidden,
Strewn amidst the tall grass.
Prayers rise up and fall back
Beneath the ashes, beneath the dreams,
Searching for a door, a road out.

House so big. House so black.
Lightless house, hopeless house.

As I arrive at our house
My lips turn blue.
These terror years are my path;
Their names are the way-stations.

Our house is Auschwitz,
So big and black. So black and big.
This is where our tears flow,
Destroying our sight.
This is where they crushed our pleas
For no one to hear.
This is where they turned us to ashes
For the winds to scatter...

The international anthem of the Romani people, *Gelem, Gelem* (meaning, 'I went, I went'), sings about encountering the *Kali Legiya* or 'black legions' on the road – the Nazi *Waffen-SS* units specially organised to murder Roma, Sinti, and Jewish people in recently occupied regions:

Gelem, gelem, lungone dromensa
Maladilem bakhtale Romensa
A Romale, katar tumen aven,
E tsarentsa bahtale dromensa?
A Romale, A Chavale
Sas vi man yekh bari familiya,
Mudardas la e Kali Legiya
Aven mansa sa lumnyake Roma,
Kai putardile e Romane droma
Ake vriama, usti Rom akana,
Amen khutasa misto kai kerasa
A Romale, A Chavale
Puter Devla le parne vudara
Te shai dikhav kai si me manusha
Pale ka zhav lungone dromendar
Thai ka phirav bakhtale Romensa
A Romalen, A chavalen
Opre Rroma, si bakht akana
Aven mansa sa lumnyake Roma
O kalo mui thai e kale yakha
Kamav len sar e kale drakha

A Romalen, A chavalen.
Here is an English translation of the text:
I went, I went on long roads
I met happy Roma
O Roma, where do you come from,
With tents happy on the road?
O Roma, O Romani youths!
I once had a great family,
The Black Legion murdered them
Come with me, Roma from all the world
For the Roma, roads have opened
Now is the time, rise up Roma now,
We will rise high if we act
O Roma, O Romani youths!
Open, God, White doors
So I can see where are my people.
Come back to tour the roads
And walk with happy Roma
O Roma, O Romani youths!
Up, Romani people! Now is the time
Come with me, Roma from all the world
Dark face and dark eyes,
I want them like dark grapes
O Roma, O Romani youths!

Žarko Jovanoviç first wrote the lyrics in 1949, after his own experience of being in the concentration camps, setting these words to a traditional folk melody. In April 1971, at the First World Romani Congress held in Orpington near London, delegates agreed to adopt the song as the international anthem of the Romani people. It is also known as *Opré Roma (Roma Arise)*.

Figure 45: Turkish Romani (Romanlar) graffiti artist, Ergün Demirci (Ergün the Blacksmith), responds to Romani Resistance Day, 2/3 August 2015, by creating a work about Rose Ottoberg, a young Sinti girl who fought against the Nazi SS camp guards at Auschwitz Birkenau II death camp when the 'Zigeunerfamilienlager' (Gypsy Family Camp) was dismantled and the inmates exterminated. Photo by Adrian Marsh; art by Ergün Demirci.

Figure 46: Protest of citizens of Budapest against whitewashing the role of Hungary in the Romani Holcaust

The Romani Porrajmos in Southeast Europe

South-eastern Europe: nationalism, nationhood, and the post-Ottoman Empire

The region of south-eastern Europe, also historically called 'the Balkans', is one that has a different historical context to other parts of the continent. From 1352CE (Common Era), the Ottoman Turks captured parts of southeast Europe, either subjugating the local rulers completely and ruling the territory directly, or by allowing local princes and nobles to remain in place as 'client' rulers, who were 'loyal' to the Ottoman sultan (usually through hostages being held by the Ottomans, to ensure 'good behaviour' on the part of their clients). A patchwork of client states and Ottoman *beyliks* (the Turkish name for a directly governed region) made up the whole of the Balkans and southeast Europe to the Danube, for 500 years, leading to a very different pattern of development in the region, compared to elsewhere in eastern and central Europe. In the region, a pattern of rule emerged that has been characterised as economically and socially very different from the rest of Europe, one that saw evolution of trade and agriculture, with little economic growth, largely in the hands of a non-Muslim population of merchants and traders. The development of what has been called the Christian Orthodox Balkan merchant class in the Ottoman Empire, who were able to endow education institutions and community facilities with considerable resources, largely through the structures of the various Christian Orthodox, and Catholic churches, eventually resulted in fostering a nationalism that was closely associated with religious identities, in opposition to the dominant Muslim state of the Ottomans.

By the end of the 19th century, the Balkan states had largely broken away from the Ottoman sultans in Constantinople, in a series of nationalist, independence wars beginning in 1804 with the Serbs, 1821 with the Greeks, and subsequent independence for the Rumanians (1878), Bulgarians (1908), and finally the Albanians in (1912). These had been supported by other major powers during the 19th century, under the general rubric of the Ottoman Empire as "the Sick Man of Europe", a phrase coined by the Russian tsar, Nicholas I. The drive to dismember the Empire, particularly to conquer Constantinople (renamed Istanbul during the 1930 Turkish reforms), drove a great deal of foreign policy for all the major European powers throughout the century, frequently called 'the Great Game'. The Russians sought to control the region and take Constantinople, thus controlling the Dardanelles or Straits, allowing them access to the Mediterranean Sea from the Black Sea. The British and others sought to limit Russian influence and expansion of the Romanov, Orthodox, Russian Empire in concert with other European powers, especially France.

The dominant concern was to maintain a 'balance of power' in Europe and beyond, limiting Russia to Asia and ensuring the *tsars* did not gain control of the Ottoman capital, and the Bosporus – to which end the British and French had supported the Ottomans in the Crimean War (1853 to 1856). The various independence wars in the Balkans, especially the Serbian, Greek, Rumanian, and Bulgarian conflicts, had allowed Russia to establish an 'Orthodox Brotherhood' and intervene to support the Orthodox Christian populations seeking independence from the Ottoman Empire, throughout the period 1804 to 1878. The First World War (1914 to 1918) had also seen Russian invasion of the northeast of Anatolia, capturing Ottoman cities – Kars, Erzerum, Van, and Erzincan – and towns for a period of some years. However, the Soviet government, following the Russian Revolution of 1917 to 1923, sought to support the early Turkish Republic and withdrew from the region, returning Kars and other cities to the new Republican government.

Figure 47: Auschwitz (Railtrack Approach)

The Balkan states in southeast Europe had significant populations of 'Gypsies', with the greatest concentrations in Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Rumania, Serbia (including Kosovo), and with smaller populations in Greece (including the Aegean, Ionian, and Mediterranean islands), Bosnia, Croatia, Moldova, Montenegro, and Slovenia. Although the inter-war period had seen significant migration of Balkan Roma into the Turkish Republic, during the population exchanges of the 1920's (the *mubadeli* in Turkish, in the wake of the Turkish War of Independence, 1919-1923 and the defeat of Greece, Italy, and the U.K.), the Romani populations of the Balkan and southeast European nation-states of the region remained substantial, clearly demonstrating a historical pattern of Romani migration and settlement going back to Byzantine times (mid-11th century CE).

The complex cultural inheritances of the Balkans and southeast Europe had resulted in independence movements that brought together ethnic-religious nationalism, anti-Islamism, an ideology of the nation-state as ethnically and religiously homogeneous, and a profound xenophobia towards the 'Other', frequently identified with minority ethnic populations within the emergent, homogeneous, nation-state boundaries. The idea of the ethnically 'pure' nation-state drove frequent conflicts between these nation-states, as they sought to incorporate 'lost' territories and populations (the Balkan Wars of 1912 to 1913) and identify the minority ethnic populations within their boundaries as 'Other' and undesirable. Most obviously, the continuing identification of 'Gypsies' as the Oriental 'Other' (together with the Jews), allowed the nationalist movements in each state to move rapidly to adopt xenophobic policies, anti-Semitism, and *anti-Gypsyism,* combined with the murderous pseudo-science of eugenics and 'race' biology, from the late 1920's onwards. With the advent of fascist states in Spain, Italy, and Germany, such movements gained a powerful impetus in Rumania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia, and Greece, intent upon removing 'aliens' such as the Jews and 'Gypsies' in the process of creating monoethnic nation-states.

Rumania, Transnistria (Moldova), and the Rumanian Roma diaspora.

The Rumanian-speaking lands saw great geographical differentiation in what happened to Roma and Jews during the Second World War, with the worst suffering beginning with deportations from one place to another. The key to understanding the variations in treatment in Rumania, Moldova (or Bessarabia), and Transnistria, lies in understanding the development and degeneration of legal chattel slavery of the Roma, from the 14th century CE until emancipation 1854 to 1861 (roughly contemporary with the abolition of African American slavery in the United States). Since thousands of Roma left the newly unified Rumanian kingdom (previously the principalities of Wallachia, Transylvania, and Moldavia, ruled by the Ottoman appointed *Phanariots*, or 'princes' who were, in fact, Greeks from Istanbul's *Phanar* – Lighthouse – neighbourhood), for other countries, the descendants of Rumanian *Vlach* Roma emigrants were amongst the most identifiable, and easily targeted victims of the Romani Holocaust (*Porrajmos*), in all the countries of Europe. The legacy of 500 years of Roma slavery in the Wallachian and Moldavian principalities are ethnic stereotypes of Roma, more damaging and demeaning than anywhere else in Europe, and pernicious racism towards them from amongst the majority population.

The actual reality of slavery – and Rumanian serfdom – over the 400 years of "neo-feudalism" is vastly more complicated than the picture Western historians have painted. Western historians called the Rumanian system from the 16th century onwards, "neo-feudalism", because it looked to them like the mediaeval *feudal* system of kings, earls, barons, and lords of the manor. This was based on everyone having a personal loyalty to the lord above them in the social hierarchy, and the lords using their retinues of knights to protect the

crops of their tenants, extract the surplus in kind, and defend their demesne or little patch of land, against bandits and enemies of the kingdom. But in reality, the Rumanian principalities of Wallachia, Moldavia, and parts of Transylvania (though the latter was always more resistant to both Ottoman control and the *Phanariots* in Bucharest) were dependent, or vassal territories of the Ottoman sultans in Constantinople, governed not by *pashas*, or *beylerbeys*, as directly ruled provinces and regions were, but by the Greek *Phanariots*, so called because they came from the neighbourhood of that name, the *Phanar*, meaning 'lighthouse', where the Orthodox Patriarch and wealthy Greeks of originally Byzantine imperial families lived. This method of 'indirect rule' was one frequently used by the British Empire in India, West Africa, and the Caribbean, in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Slavery was an integral part of the Ottoman Empire (1320 to 1920), as it had been of the Byzantine, late Roman, and classical Athenian empires before. Slavery under Islam was fundamentally different to the later racial slavery of both Roma in Rumanian lands, and African Americans in the United States. Under the Ottomans, all subjects were considered 'slaves of the sultan', with varying categories of status as *abd* and *kul* governed by legal frameworks and strict conditions. Slavery was a legal status, its obligations – and rights – defined by law. Most slaves could own property, even other slaves, and provided they carried out their duties to their owners, were defended by law against abuse. The kind of slavery that the apostle Paul supported and tried to make work humanely between his friends Philemon the slave-owner and Onesimus the slave, had almost nothing in common with the savage barbarity of the American cotton plantations of the 19th century or the Russian "Gulag Archipelago" slave labour camps of the 20th century. Ottoman slaves could even be rich and privileged. The Grand Viziers (Prime Ministers), the *pashas* (governors), *beys* (lords), *sipahis* (cavalry officers), *çelebi* (gentlemen of the court), even the *sheyhzades* (princes) of the Ottoman *Padishah* (king of kings) were technically slaves, as they 'ate the bread of the sultan'. Not all slaves were unfree in the same way, however, and the situation of a captured, Christian galley-slave was very different, and very much more brutal, than a *Janissary* (Ottoman palace guard), or a rich noble at the court.

We need to understand slavery as not just one constant thing but an evolving and varied system. How did slavery degenerate to a system where slaves had no human rights at all and could just be worked to death with impunity? How were the checks and balances which made the system bearable eroded? There are many reasons; but the most important is the operation of the slave trade. Selling human beings as though they are just things to be exploited strips away traditional protections, especially when the slaves are sold away from their own country to people in other countries as happened to African slaves sold to European and American slave traders and owners in countries where the protections of Roman law had long vanished as slavery had been replaced by serfdom, a system where unfree agricultural workers had their own little plots of land to support themselves.

In Rumania, the system of indirect rule by a Greek, Orthodox Christian *neo-nobility* meant that the protections afforded by Muslim, *Shari'a* law in the Ottoman Empire no longer applied, especially as the *Phanariots* 'bought' their positions through enormous payments to the Ottoman treasury. This led to the merciless extraction and exaction of taxes from the *boyars*, or nobles of the Wallachian and Moldavian lands, and the rest of the Rumanian society, in order to recoup these vast expenses. In addition, the Sultan expected the major part of that taxation, the *cizye* or Christian head-tax, to be forwarded to Constantinople, in a system called 'tax-farming'. Serfdom was a way of tying peasant labour to the land and ensuring productivity from agriculture, at minimum expense to the nobles and princes, but was mitigated by the understanding that individual serfs could not be sold away from the land that they tenanted – that is almost the conventional definition of serfdom as opposed to slavery.

By contrast, Roma slavery existed in differing degrees and conditions across the principalities. Some Roma slaves were tied to particular *boyars*, because of their metalworking, or gold-smith skills. Others were restricted in their movements to very local environments, as horse-breeders and traders. Romani miners were another group that were restricted but valued. Roma craftspeople were also kept close by noble residences and royal villages, settlements that were themselves Roma villages. We find some examples of Roma slaves owning landed property, and having general freedom of movement and enterprise, provided their traditional obligations to their noble or royal owners were fulfilled. Musicians and entertainers were most mobile in this context, being able to travel more extensively through a number of noble *demesnes* to perform, but not beyond the princes' domains. The most unfree of Roma slaves were those who were agricultural labourers, demeaned and despised, frequently living in the most abject poverty, families separated through sales and deportations to other estates as punishment. These were brutalised and emiserated, in circumstances that more closely resembled racial slavery in the plantation economy, in the Caribbean and United States. And whether more or less unfree or tasked, this was a form of racial slavery, as no other ethnic communities were subject to these forms of forced labour, in the Rumanian lands.

We find almost interminable lawsuits between monasteries, princes, boyars, and their slaves, lasting generations, disputing exactly who Roma slaves belonged to, and what the terms of any gifts or bequests meant. Most of the court records from before Rumanian unification and independence (following the 1877 to 1878 Russo-Turkish War), which can tell us so much about the struggles of Roma to assert and protect themselves, are hand-written in the Ottoman script (a mixture of Turkish, Arabic, and *Farsi* or Persian), and consequently were ignored by most 20th century historians of the Romani peoples. Only now are they being deciphered by dedicated Ottomanists and archivists who want to explore the topic of the origins of Roma slavery, its workings, and its legacy, to deconstruct the stereotypes and challenge the myths promoted by so much of Rumania's nationalised history.

But we can begin to understand what happened, as so often, by looking at the work of Matéo Maximoff, that same Matéo Maximoff who published the first denunciation of the Holocaust in 1946. His novel, *Le Prix de la Liberté* (Paris 1955), loosely based on the story of his own grandfather, gives a fictional depiction of the last days of slavery in Rumania, when slavery was becoming economically unviable, the price of slaves was falling sharply, and conditions were becoming intolerable, leading to heroic slave revolts and emigration.[1] It has two Romani words for "slavery": 'esklavuria' (a Latin root) and 'rhobimos' (a Slavic root) with very different connotations. 'Esklavuria' is the traditional relationship of slavery, bearable because its human relations, even if unequal and exploitative, are well-known, predictable, even affectionate. 'Rhobimos' is introduced by a visit to a penal colony belonging to the same slave-owner, where convicts, whether slaves being punished for breaking the rules, or criminals of any ethnicity, are being worked to death at gold-panning, with minimal rations and no medical attention. The old slave-owning count dies, and Maximoff depicts an only slightly accelerated version of actual history, where the hours of work of traditional slaves are increased, their rations decreased, and discontent punished with increasingly murderous violence. In other words, 'esklavuria' degenerates into 'rhobimos'. Maximoff depicts these atrocities becoming politically unsustainable and leading to the eventual general emancipation of the slaves. And it is notable that in Rumanian Romani *Vlach* dialects across the world today, the usual word for slavery is 'robimos'. It is the terrible last period of slavery that lingers in oral memory.

But what did emancipation, the freeing of the slaves actually mean? In Maximoff's Romani text there are again two different words for freedom, "skepime" (from a Latin root)[2] and "svoboda" (from a Slavic root). And again, the connotations are very different. 'Skepime' means simple emancipation, or escape, becoming free. 'Svoboda' means full liberty, rights, and citizenship under a constitutional government, and Maximoff's book shows you can pay a high price for your 'skepime' without achieving anything more than the most nominal 'svoboda'. Like hundreds of thousands of other Roma, Maximoff's grandfather had to emigrate to leave behind the status of *former* slave.

In the late 19th century, the princes of Wallachia and Moldavia gained autonomy from the Ottoman Empire, adopted the forms of European parliamentary government and nominal civil rights. The majority Rumanian-speaking part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Transylvania, managed to join Rumania, following their defeat and collapse at the end of the First World War in 1918. The key figure in this enlargement was the charismatic Alexandru Vaida-Voevod, who was three times elected Prime Minister of Rumania, in 1919, 1932, and 1933. In his own career he exemplified the evolution of Rumanian politics from constitutional monarchism to populist nationalism and then outright fascism. He started off as a radical, democratising, Peasant Party nationalist, and then drifted steadily to the political right. In the 1930's he supported the employers in labour struggles that saw violent police repression of the workers, and as his own support waned. He then threw his support behind Marshal Ion Antonescu, who in the mid-1930's was still presenting himself as a military technocrat who could bring together the centre and the far right, and defend society against both Communists, trade union agitators, and foreigners. Antonescu, however, moved against both the monarchists and the centre parties, and with the support of two fascist parties, ousted King Carol in the coup of 1940. Antonescu adopted the title *Conducator* (dictator) and allied with Nazi Germany. One immediate consequence was that Moldova (Bessarabia), which had been taken over by the Soviet Union in 1918, was re-occupied by Rumania.

Antonescu saw both Roma and Jews as threatening and was personally sympathetic to the Nazi goal of eliminating them. But the Rumanian stereotype of Roma was more that they were feckless, stupid and dirty; the idea that they were threatening like the powerful Jews was faintly absurd. Cruelty to *Cigany (Gypsy)* for many Rumanians was as distasteful as cruelty to animals. So, while the Germans were considering extermination in 1941, Nicolae Cădere, in the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Welfare, as an 'expert' recommended forcibly resettling Roma in labour camps which could deal with those suited to farm work, those who had other skills, and those who were not capable of work at all. In a meeting on 4th April 1941, Antonescu suggested that the state had to react promptly and firmly by identifying all Roma living in Bucharest so that they could be deported. Huts were to be built in the neighbouring county, Ialomița, where they would be put to work on big estates. These Roma villages would have to be then patrolled by guards.[3]

This plan was never implemented; the priority was to hold on to the re-conquered territory of Moldova, and to eliminate trade unionists and socialists, who were seen as "fifth columnists" supporting the Soviet Russians. But the idea of deportation for both Roma and Jews, who were seen as making a nuisance of themselves (for example, by nomadism or travelling) remained in currency. The re-conquest of Moldova was indeed marked by racist massacres of Jews and Roma in the frontier regions, Bukovina, and Transnistria, where Russian speakers were predominant, and which had been the administrative centres of Soviet Moldova. When the occupation settled down, Transnistria, practically on the frontline, was seen as the ideal location to deport 'a-social elements' starting with Jews. Thousands were sent there swamping the capacity of the new Rumanian administrators, and on 8th October 1941, Antonescu postponed the deportation of Roma until 1st May 1942, when the deportation of itinerant, travelling Roma started. On 17th May 1942, the Ministry of Interior added sedentary Roma, with criminal backgrounds, or the unemployed who were seen as a burden to society. All Roma adults who fitted these descriptions, along with their spouses and children, provided that the children lived with their parents, had to be registered.[4]

These descriptions were very vague, however, and the law was so uncertain that police and local magistrates had virtually unlimited powers of deciding who were to be deported. Simply commuting to a job could be called criminal itinerancy by a hostile local policeman; living in a *Cigany* ('Gypsy') settlement, or just being dark-skinned could be used as evidence. The mayor of Tărgoviște protested against resorting to judging skin colour as a way to identify who is a Roma, on behalf of those he implied just happened to be dark-skinned, but not Roma.

The round-up included some Roma women and children whose husbands, fathers, or brothers were serving in the Rumanian army. The county office of Constanța refused most petitions against this on the grounds the petitioners had no occupation but to steal, beg, perform sorcery, or fortune-telling, though a few Roma managed to persuade courts that they did not fit the criteria. There were some petitions by ethnic Rumanians who asked for individuals to be spared and not deported.[5] The majority of these petitions, however, were sent too late, after the deportation of Roma had already happened. Some 24,000 Roma were deported to Transnistria, half of which were children. Approximately 12,000 of these are believed to have lost their lives through murder, brutal treatment, starvation, or disease. Many Roma avoided the deportations, often concealing their ethnic identity, serving in the army and in government administration. One such, Ionel Rotaru, became very important at a European level after the war.

The early life of Ionel Rotaru is shrouded in mystery, and the only evidence for it comes from his own highly contradictory writings, or early interviews with French police and immigration authorities.[6] In 1944, when Russian forces recaptured Moldova, he fled back to Bucharest and then, to Italy and eventually to Paris, where he presented himself as a Rumanian nationalist, anti-Communist refugee from Moldova. He was an active member of the post-war right-wing Rumanian exile community in Paris, who helped him to publish his first novel, *Les démons de Minuit,* in 1953, an exceedingly rare book of which only one surviving copy is known to exist.[7]

With his own experience, he was able to help less educated (or even illiterate) *Rudari* Roma to deal with their immigration and residence problems. He was helped by Jacques Dauvergne, a young paralegal whose mother was a *Rudari* immigrant. And he came into contact with the tiny Roma artistic fringe in Paris, which included Yul Brynner, Žarko Jovanovič (the Serbian Roma *balalaika* virtuoso who wrote what is now the Romani international anthem, "Gelem, Gelem"), and indeed, the celebrated *Kalderash* Roma writer, Matéo Maximoff.

In 1959, he set up an extra-ordinary piece of performance art, which arguably changed European history. Together with his *Rudari* friends, he had himself crowned in public as Vaida Voevod III, chief of all the *Ursari Tsiganes*, or Bear-leading Gypsies, of the world. Beforehand, he conducted a skilful publicity campaign, planting stories in the press. The coronation was attended by much of the French press, and excellent photos were taken which are today widely available on the internet. The West European press also picked up the story. The story became a staple of journalistic books about the 'Gypsies'. And the press took seriously his most audacious demand, that the West German government pay collective reparations to the Roma people.

He set up an organisation, the *Comité Mondial Gitane* (CMG), with his supporter Jacques Dauvergne, whom he persuaded to adopt the nom-de-guerre of *Vanko Rouda*, which rapidly gained considerable popularity not only among their *Rudari* supporters, but also among other ethnic Roma groups in France. Rotaru published another novel which presented Roma as the heart of the suffering Rumanian underclasses, and toured Europe supporting emerging Romani and Traveller civil rights movements, Gypsy Christian Pentecostal churches, and spinning ever more fantastic stories to the press. The German government abandoned its claim that Roma had only been sent to concentration camps because of 'asocial' tendencies, and accepted the principle that individual reparations should be paid, and Vaida, Vanko and the *CMG* helped many Roma to make individual claims.

Collective reparations could not be made, however, because there was no central Roma authority, as was the case with the state of Israel for the Jews. This gave the international dimension of the CMG a double importance; not only were they trying to use international solidarity to bolster local civil rights struggles, but they were also trying to construct an international body authoritative enough to be the legitimate recipient of collective reparations. By the time of the First World Romani Congress in London, 8th April 1971, we can see that the slow recognition of the Roma Holocaust by the world has been crucially dependent on two Roma of Rumanian heritage: the passionate evangelical search for truth of Matéo Maximoff as he devoted himself to Roma political and spiritual movements, but also Ionel Rotaru.

Matéo Maximoff had received personal reparations for the time he spent in a Vichy concentration camp, shortly before the 1971 Congress. He used the money to buy a second-hand car, in which he drove himself to that Congress, for which he did all the Romani translation, including the debate over the adoption of the first authoritative scholarly report on the Romani Holocaust by Grattan Puxon and Donald Kenrick.

Bulgaria

Bulgaria achieved independence from the Ottoman Empire as a result of the Russo-Turkish war in 1877 to 1878, and its foreign policy since has been built around actively seeking the protection of strong foreign powers. The Bulgarian Orthodox church became the state religion of the country, with its priests paid, as they continued to be even in Communist times, as civil servants of the state. The Bulgarian Church developed an even stronger nationalism, with many members believing that only Bulgarians should be church members, and that other Christians should join their own church: Rumanians the Rumanian Orthodox, Greeks the Greek Orthodox, Russians the Russian Orthodox (and the English, as the British prime minister and friend to the Bulgarians, Gladstone suggested, should join the Anglican Church).

Bulgarian Roma have been members of all the varieties of Christianity and Islam present on Bulgarian soil and have furnished both Muslim *Khodjas* and Orthodox priests since the 19th century. Roma-led Sufi lodges in Bulgaria and Turkey are among the earliest examples of autonomous Roma formal organisations in Europe, while the Romani Baptist church of Lom, founded in 1921, is perhaps the oldest Roma-led Christian evangelical congregation in Eastern Europe.

Bulgarian nationalists have been constantly faced with dilemmas, since it is likely that only a little over half the population have an unquestionably Bulgarian ethnic heritage. One response to this has been to count as many Bulgarian citizens as ethnic Bulgarians as possible. Thus, 'Pomaks' are defined as 'ethnic Bulgarian Muslims' (and definitely not Turks!), and Turks themselves have been put under pressure to adopt Bulgarian names through government policies of the 1990's. Yet, many Muslim Bulgarian Roma (and Roma in the Balkans in general), found it easier to defend their specific ethnicity by calling themselves Turks. And the actual relative numbers of Muslim, Orthodox (and other Christians), and Jews are themselves subject to dispute, not least because of the clear habit over the Ottoman past to recent times, of many people re-defining both their ethnic identity, and religion according to their own personal convenience, or that of powerful local notables who are their patrons (in Turkish, *Ayân*).

Who are these local notables, the former Ottoman *ayân*? They are the persistence of a level of society that we identified in Rumania as *compradors* – traditionally powerful people who are prepared to administer their local areas on behalf of a faraway empire. In late 19th century Rumania, the power of the *comprador* class was broken by urbanisation overseen by monarchists and nationalists. But in rural Bulgaria, with its many changes of political authority and external influences, the local notables perfected the strategy of bowing to prevailing winds. And it was not only their religion and ethnic affiliation they were prepared to adjust; it is also their political affiliation. Thus, in a village in the 21st century, one might find the former manager of the collective farm, himself the descendant of a long line of local notables, living in comfortable retirement in the village. But one of his sons has become a businessman and an important member of a neoliberal party in government in Sofia. The other son, however, is a member of the Socialist party. If the government changes – why, the sons will just swap places. And in the mornings, in his front parlour, the old collective farm manager will be 'at home' to a series of visitors, both Bulgarian and Roma villagers, some with items they have repaired for him, some with fresh vegetables, or maybe a chicken, and each asking for some kind of favour from him, some problem to be fixed. And he has the contacts to fix them.

The Bulgarian word for this network of personal contacts and loyalties that lets problems get fixed is "vraski". Post-Communist Bulgaria has an even broader range of political parties than most, and they often have highly committed ideological adherents. Yet, the alternation of power between neoliberals and the Socialist party resembles nothing so much as the 'swing of the pendulum' where the interests of the notables and their

small blocs of client votes bring about a change of government, which changes little in society. There has even been an election victory won by a coalition led by the former war-time child king (1943-5), though Simeon Borisov von Saxe-Coburg-Gotha (Prime Minister 2001-2005) did not attempt to restore the monarchy. Indeed, after losing the 2005 election he went into a coalition with the Socialists. His pragmatism did not stop some Bulgarian Orthodox Christian priests claiming his victory as a divine miracle for the Bulgarian people. The Bulgarian upper class has its economic, ethnic, religious, and political fractions and gender divides, with genuinely competing interests. But when they have needed to come together and make compromises to secure their relationships with successive dominant foreign powers or blocs, so far, they have.

Part of this *comprador* ruling class practice is to cast the most favourable light on what happened in previous eras, to appeal to the perspective of the current foreign sponsors. So, like other former Axis powers, Austria, Hungary and even Italy, the war-time activities of their armies are presented as 'brave anti-Communist resistance.' Nationalist historians fall over themselves to praise the Royal Bulgarian Army for openly including and promoting Roma soldiers who won many medals for acts of bravery.[8] They even praise their supposedly valiant contribution to the Axis forces' invasion and conquest of Macedonia and Thrace for the Kingdom of Bulgaria in 1941. They praise the Kingdom's wisdom for changing sides in 1944 to join the Allies, even while simultaneously remaining at war with the Soviet Union, who most unfairly still invaded Bulgaria, and with the help of local Communist partisans, overthrew the kingdom in 1945, and regret the West did not come to throw the Communists out, as they did in Greece. What makes such writing particularly disquieting is how similar the rhetoric and arguments are to those who write praising the equally substantial Romani contribution to the British and Soviet armed forces. This points up the continuing general lack of understanding of how the lethal combination of the sentiment "my country right or wrong!", and the glorification of military violence, have set the scene for the suffering of European Jews and Roma for many centuries.

There were *Draft Bills for the Abolition of Wandering Cigany-Nomads* in both 1937 and 1941, which were justified by a repetition of the common racist stereotypes; but the failure to enact them in parliament suggests they were primarily gestures of support for their Nazi allies. Nonetheless, there clearly were officials who were quite keen to implement them in the event of a Nazi victory. And clearly there were many Roma who did oppose the fascist war, aware of the danger a Nazi victory would have posed to Roma, and who joined the partisan resistance. Some went on to be active in the post-war Communist party and government, and the Romani language and folklore movement blossomed in the late 1940s and early 1950s, until, with the rise to power of Nikita Kruschev in the Soviet Union (USSR), in the mid-1950s, Bulgaria followed the Soviet line of reducing Romani language work from the political to the purely folklore and cultural role. Leading Roma figures at this time included Demeter Golemanov, son of a partisan resistance hero, and Manush Romanov. Golemanov, was one of the earliest Roma leaders to make international contacts with other Roma leaders, visiting both the USSR and the UK. After 1989, however, his identification with the Communist regime made him somewhat of a yesterday's man. Manush Romanov (born 1928) survived the transition to establish the Democratic Union of Roma and briefly served as an MP, from 1990-1991. Neither are icons of today's Bulgarian Roma movement.

To start to look beneath these successive official narratives, we have almost to start again with the granular narratives of local and oral history. A start on this has been made by the Bulgarian Roma professor Hristo Kyuchukov[9], (born in 1962). Growing up as a Muslim under the Communist regime, he started his professional life as a primary school teacher. The huge number of children's books in Romani and Bulgarian that he has published, can give us some idea of just what an unforgettable teacher he must have been for any child lucky enough to have been taught by him. He branched out from pedagogy to educational linguistics and psychology, and has held professorial chairs in several countries.

Kyuchukov unravels the prevailing general narrative by collecting the oral accounts of Roma about their own persecution, their forced deportation, the labour camps, and the digging of mass graves during the Second World War. He starts with the stories from his own grandfather, grandmother, and aunt, about the winter of 1943-1944, when all 3,000 or so Roma residents of the town of Provadia, were rounded up to the train station by soldiers with rifles and dogs. All of them were ordered to board cattle-wagons and told they would be deported.

But before departure, the order was countermanded, and the Roma were allowed to return to their homes. Several days later, however, they were ordered to dig a mass grave, just outside the town. All the Roma families were lined up next to the grave and believed they would be shot. But once again, it turned out to be only an exercise in intimidation. Instead, they were conscripted to forced labour and lived in semi-starvation in nearby villages, until they were liberated by the arrival of the Soviet army in 1944. There was a *coup d'etat* (military change in government) in September 1944, and the Bulgarian state left the Axis and joined the Allies.

This story narrative was confirmed by a Roma woman or Romni (in the Romani language) from Provadia, Siyana Romanova, who said her father told her about the attempt to deport Roma to a concentration camp, about the mass grave, and about the forced labour of Roma in neighbouring villages. An ethnic Turk from Provadia, Hasan Mehmed Halimolu, who was 95 when he spoke to Kyuchukov, added that only the Roma had hard labour forced upon them. Although the Turks and the Roma lived close by each other, the police would know who the Roma were, and select only them for forced labour.

Stories of intimidation through being made to dig mass graves turn up again and again in Kyuchukov's data. Anton Karagyozov from Plovdiv says his parents told him a similar story. A hundred kilometres away, in the large Romani ghetto of Fakulteta, which was then on the outskirts of Sofia, Dimka Nedkova heard a similar story of being forced to dig a huge trench near a local cemetery, and the order to shoot the Roma being countermanded only at the last minute. Biser Alekov, a Roma from the village of Seslav, told a story he heard from an 89-year-old Bulgarian who once supported the Nazi regime and their anti-Roma ideology. He and a group of young Bulgarians from the village of Seslav decided to attack their Roma neighbours and to kill them, but were thwarted by Communist partisans who learned of the plot and came to the defence of the Roma.

Kada Vejselova from the village of Lesnovo (a village in central-western Bulgaria in Sofia Province) was 92 when she spoke to Kyuchukov. Her village was populated both by Roma and Bulgarians, and the Roma neighbourhoods were often attacked by Bulgarians who set alight some of their houses during the winter. Interestingly, Kada recalls German soldiers coming to her village at the time, and though they knew who Roma were, were polite and friendly, giving chocolate to the Roma children, and soap to the women, considered luxuries at the time. A much younger man, Valeri Lekov from Kyustendil, only 51 when he spoke to Kyuchukov, related horrific stories he had heard from an old Bulgarian teacher there of systematic violence against Roma in Kyustendil committed by the members of the national conservative party IMRO (Bulgarian National Movement.) This included brutal killings of men and women in the presence of their children. The local police and authorities in the town turned a blind eye to these crimes and Roma were forced to flee their homes and hide in the mountains.

The overall picture, then, is of a diverse and divided society, a patchwork of kindness, cruelty, desperation, and courage, where racists took advantage of wartime to pursue local feuds, but no "final solution" was attempted before the end of the Second World War.

Albania

Albania only became an independent country after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkan War of 1912, in which many of the country's elite had supported the Ottomans. They contributed many colonial administrators within the Ottoman Empire, such as Muhammad Ali (Albanian, though born in Macedonia) who was the Ottoman governor of Egypt 1805 – 1848, and ancestor of the Egyptian royal family. The Muslim *comprador* elite of Albania had good relations with the Islamicised (those who had adopted Islam under the Ottomans) part of their Roma communities, some of whom followed Muhammad Ali to Egypt, where they were called *Ghagar* and were still speaking European Romani in the early 20th century. By the end of the 20th century, however, they had intermarried with the much larger local *Halebi* community and largely spoke their language. The Halebi language is *Domari* strongly influenced by Egyptian Arabic. *Domari* is the language of the Dom, another group of partial Indian heritage like the Roma, whose Indian ancestors, judging by their language, left India 200 or 300 years before the immediate Indian ancestors of the Roma.[10]

The mixture of the *Ghagar* and the *Halebi* in Egypt is far from being the only example of such mixture across the Ottoman Empire, though racists insist it never happened. Although the European Union classifies them all as Roma for structural political purposes, across the Balkans, there are several groups, whose heritage, in terms of Romani, *Domari* and other historic commercial-nomadic communities, are still much disputed. They differ not only in language and historic trades, but also on whether they are Catholic, Orthodox Christian, or Muslim, and their affiliation both with older traditional political leaders in the past, and modern political divides often correlates with their religion. This explains why some individual Roma are found on all sides of wars in the region, including the Second World War, and why nationalist leaders often see all Roma as belonging to 'the enemy'. In Albania, and Kosovo (which is majority Albanian-speaking) this spectrum of groups is known as Roma, *Ashkali* and *Balkan Egyptians*.
When Albania was 'liberated' in 1912, it fell very much under the influence of Italy who sought Catholic, as well Muslim, or Orthodox, *comprador*

elites for their indirect rule. The prince they selected, Vilhem Vidi, appointed a Muslim Prime Minister, who was overthrown in 1914 by a Catholic uprising. Great instability followed, exacerbated by local blood-feuds which remain a vibrant tradition in Albanian societies, with conflict, political and sometimes armed, between followers of the first Albanian Orthodox Patriarch, the great poet and author, Fan Noli, and the first elected Muslim Prime Minister Ahmet Zogu. Zogu was elected Prime Minister in 1922, overthrown briefly in 1924, before returning in a coup a few weeks later. In 1925 he declared himself President, with dictatorial powers until 1928, when he declared himself Zog I, King of Albania. He pursued deeply conservative policies, suppressing civil liberties, trying at almost all costs to keep in well with the Italian dictator, Mussolini, but at the same time placating traditional leaders of the two main Albanian ethnic groups, the *Geg* and the *Tosk*, the ethnic minorities, and the three main religious communities, claiming he was protecting them from too much interference from the West.

Eventually, however, even before the declaration of war on Nazi Germany by Great Britain, Mussolini, worried that Hitler was stealing a march on him by conquering Czechoslovakia, demanded Zog join Italy's war effort to attack Greece. When Zog refused, in April 1939, Italy over-ran Albania in a few days, forcing Zog into exile. They had no difficulty in finding nationalist collaborators and benefited from the German victory over Yugoslavia by seizing most of Kosovo, and some parts of Montenegro, Macedonia, and Serbia, though the Italian invasion of Greece was an abject failure. Greece seized southern parts of Albania until April 1941, when Greece was conquered directly by Germany.

During 1939-1943, therefore, ethnic cleansing and genocide were no more a policy priority in Albania than they were in Italy. This changed when the Kingdom of Italy capitulated in 1943, leaving Nazi Germany with the self-appointed task of taking over Italy and its overseas territories, and hunting down the Jews and Roma that Italy and its friends had neglected, and whose numbers had been increased by refugees in Albania up till 1943. Germany set up a new collaborationist nationalist government of the National Front, the *Balli Kombëtar* in September 1943. This galvanised most Albanians into support of the Communist resistance. There exists oral history suggesting that there were deportations of some Roma to an island in the Adriatic Sea, which led many Roma to join the partisans. The Germans were too busy elsewhere to help the *Ballistas* and effectively Albania and Kosovo had their own civil war, which the Communists, led by Enver Hoxha, won decisively in just over a year, establishing a provisional government in the capital, Tirana, when the Germans left Albania on 29 November 1944, although some nationalists fought on in the north until January 1946.

So, there was only one year during which Roma and Jews were exposed to Nazi policies, and by and large they were protected, especially by the majority Albanian Muslims who chose not to comply with the requests of the Nazi occupiers to give information about the Jews in the country. Instead, they helped Jews and Roma to hide their real identities by providing fake documents, by providing shelters and hiding places, and misdirecting the Nazis. These acts of bravery, kindness, and readiness to help those in need, or to whom a traditional obligation of *noblesse oblige* (traditional protectiveness) may be seen as an expression of Albanian belief in the code of honour called *Besa*, that emphasises promise-keeping. The traditional Albanian code of honour, the Code of *Lek Dukajin*, also contains an implicit threat of reckless revenge, which also plays a part, as we will see when we discuss an example in Kosovo, below. The official listing of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians as members of other ethnic groups may help to explain the continuing small official figures for the numbers of Albanian Roma. As in some other post-Communist countries of eastern Europe, official memorialisation of the Second World war is more in terms of general anti-fascist resistance, than a concentration on the Holocaust, although these two narratives are not incompatible. Roma were not mentioned as Holocaust victims in official Albanian school textbooks until 2015.

Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina

In Bulgaria, where the murder of Roma was a kind of overflow of Nazi influence, rather than consistent state policy under the fascist regime in Croatia, led by Anton Pavelič. He actively and independently espoused genocidal policies not only against Roma and Jews, but also against Serbs. The Serbs were seen as the greatest threat, and as thoroughly mixed up with Roma and Jews who spied for them and supported their 'oriental decadence'. Although Pavelič and his *Ustasha* (fascist militia) movement had been based in exile in Italy, and had been friendly with Mussolini before the war, in ideology and genocidal zeal they were nearer to Hitler. So, although formally, after 1941, Croatia was an Italian territory with an Italian princeling as an absent head of state until 1943, Pavelič could balance Italian and German interests to act autonomously (in his own right), with the support of the conservative, local Roman Catholic hierarchy. Croatian racial hygiene laws were modelled on Germany, and Pavelič began to implement genocidal policies earlier than Germany.

The Independent State of Croatia (ISC) incorporated almost all of Bosnia and Herzegovina and had a diverse population of about 7.5 million Croats, Serbs, Muslims, and others. Around 10% of these populations were killed by its government, a greater proportion of its own citizens that in Nazi Germany. Of the 28,000 Roma reported

by the 1931 census, (about 55% Orthodox, 35% Catholic, and 10% Muslim) not more than 200 to 300 survived, again a lower survival rate than that of German Sinti and Roma. In addition, Roma from across Serbia and other parts of Yugoslavia occupied by other Axis powers, perished in Croatian concentration camps, some 30,000 in the Jasenovač camp alone.[11]

In June 1941, the *Ustasha* regime agreed with the German government to transfer about 200,000 Serbs to German-occupied Serbia. This move towards creating an ethnically 'pure' state was received with euphoria by Croatian bureaucrats, and encouraged them to deal also with Jews and Roma, even though German-occupied Serbia would not accept them as deportees. However, the option to deport Jews and Roma from Croatia was unavailable in 1941, as the agreement that the Croatian government reached with Germany applied only to the Serbs. An internal final solution was needed.

Already under the racial laws, all Roma had had to register with the police from 22nd - 23rd July 1941, and Roma businesses and property were confiscated and turned over to Croatian individuals. Many Roma were legal owners of assets such as land, houses, and livestock, but the definition of who was Roma had remained unclear, so local officials had some discretion. Muslim officials in Bosnia, concerned that other Muslims might also be targeted, intervened on behalf of Muslim Roma, especially those seen as sedentary and *white*, rather than nomadic and *black*, even though that difference was not always clear. As a result, the Croatian government agreed that any Roma who could prove they were Muslim would be released, (even though once deported to a camp, it would be hardly possible for any Roma to prove their religious identity.)

Generally, however, the *Ustasha* opted for sending their Roma to concentration camps which eventually led to their mass murder. The largest and most infamous camp was at Jasenovač.[12] The first mass arrests of Roma began from July 1941 and on 16th May 1942, Croatian authorities ordered the transfer of all Roma across Croatia to Jasenovač. All Roma were to be arrested and handed over the local district administrations and all institutions were required to cooperate, including the Croatian police and army. Although not all officials co-operated, many did, throughout 1941-1943. They sent Roma to concentration and death camps such as Jasenovač, Jadovno, Pag, Tenje, and Stara Gradska. Once detained by police or army, Roma were escorted to temporary places of assembly such as schools, barns, or public squares. Then, they were sent to the nearest train station or transported by busses and army vehicles. If they lived close to Jasenovač camp, they were made to use their own carts and thus some Roma arrived in the camp with their horses, livestock and even show animals such as monkeys and bears. Once in Jasenovač, the Roma would be registered, their property would be confiscated, and they would be subject to immediate physical violence to instil order by intimidation in the camp.

By the end of 1942, nearly all Roma in the Jasenovač concentration camp would be executed. The Roma were isolated in a special section of the camp, the so-called 'Gypsy camp', in the village of Uštica adjoining Jasenovač, which had been previously populated by ethnic Serbs. Roma families, mainly women and children, were placed here where the first mass executions took place, and the corpses buried there. There are twenty-one mass graves at the Roma cemetery in Uštica. Roma detainees were also put in an unfurnished section of Jasenovač – Camp III C – on bare ground surrounded with barbed wire, where inmates died slowly and painfully of hunger, thirst, exhaustion, and physical mistreatment. One survivor, Narcisa Lengel-Krizman, writes that the Roma "...were in a dead end. The guards perceived them as lowly animals and felt entitled to treat them brutally. No one was ever held responsible." Later, Roma inmates were transferred to an execution site located in the village of Gradina, which is on the opposite site of the Sava River. A second wave of Roma deportees arrived at Jasenovač, and this time they had to undergo a special selection in which the elderly Roma would be transferred straight over the River Sava to Gradina, where they would be immediately executed and buried in mass graves which would have been already prepared.

A small number of Roma in Jasenovač were made to undertake the very strenuous work as labourers in brickworks, sawmills, or embankment work on the Sava River. There were also a small number of Roma who were deported from Jasenovač to Germany as slave labour. By the summer of 1942, several Croatian Roma were also transported for 'medical experimentation' and more systematic experimentation, at Auschwitz-Birkenau and other camps. Another group of approximately one hundred Roma, were made to dig mass graves and dispose of the dead bodies in the Jasenovač camp, which stimulated hatred against the Roma by other inmates of the camp. Some former inmates claimed that the guards had made the Roma drunk and after that made them assist in the mass killings, others have reported that the Roma inmates had sadistic tendencies and committed many atrocities in the camp. All of this led some other prisoners to believe that Roma, and Jews, were spies and worked for the *Ustasha*, a divisive racism encouraged by the guards.

The residues of scientific racism in contemporary demography mask the incompetence of its ethnic categorisations (although the demographers try to

blame this on the 'unreliability' of ethnic minority respondents).[13] This engenders rather pointless controversies over the exact numbers of Holocaust victims from each community, which merely point to different statistical methodologies and ethnic typologies, with a fair amount of double counting of individuals with multiple ethnic heritages. This grisly competition still bedevils all Holocaust studies and explains how estimates of the number of Roma who died in Jasenovač range between 15,000 and 40,000, and figures on the number of Croatian Roma killed depend entirely on how many of those Roma (who often travelled across the whole of Yugoslavia and beyond before the war), are seen as 'belonging' there.

Unsurprisingly, the recorded number of Roma deaths in Croatia, due to the Romani Holocaust has increased, as more research has been done on the topic. For instance, in 2003, the survivor Narcisa Lengel-Krizman managed to record 8,750 names, surnames, and other data related to Roma killed in Jasenovač.[14] The most recent research, however, on data from records of the ISC, found 16,173 Roma victims; 5,688 men, 4,877 women, and 5,608 children under 14.[15]

By April 1945, Germany was everywhere in retreat. Savage to the last, on April 24, 1945, retreating German SS members caught 43 German Sinti – men, women, and children – who had run away to Croatia and tried to hide in a village near Zagreb. Some of them were tortured and eventually all of them were burned in a barn in the village Hristina. Pavelič and his fascist army went on fighting in a shrinking territory in the north for more than two weeks after Nazi Germany capitulated on 8th May 1945. Croatia capitulated only after the final battle of the Second World War in Europe, the Battle of Odžak, 25th May 1945. Pavelič fled to Austria, Italy, Argentina, and finally Spain, where he died in 1959.

Slovenia

During the Second World War, Slovenia was split between Germany and Italy. The ethnic Slovenes under the German rule were declared 'Aryans.' At the outbreak of the War, there was a small Roma population in the country. Many also travelled in Italy and found it safer to remain there than under German rule. Most were quickly rounded up and deported to concentration camps in Germany, Croatia, or German-occupied Serbia, and they shared the fate of other Roma in those camps, but one concentration camp was created in a disused factory near Ljubljana. Zilka Heldt (who later married Dennis Mariner and became one of the founders of the *Gypsy Council* in England, in 1966) told of her father who returned from Italy to Slovenia to help other Roma flee the country. He was captured and put in the Ljubljana camp. Eventually, he managed to escape the factory by removing some tiles from the roof and fled Slovenia again.[16] Some ethnic Slovenes who lived in the countryside helped Roma families by hiding them in their homes.

The events of the Sinti and Roma Holocaust have been almost entirely absent from Slovene school history textbooks until very recently, when the new school history course introduced, in its text for 4th year pupils, a short paragraph with information about the "forgotten genocide of Roma", and a picture from 1940 from the Belzec concentration camp located in Poland. It is not discussed as something that affected Slovenia.[17]

Serbia

After a heavy bombardment of Belgrade which killed many Roma in their neighbourhood of Zemun, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia capitulated to the Germans on 6th April 1941. Some border areas of Serbia were allocated to Albania, (much of Kosovo, and Bosni-Herzegovina), and Bulgaria, Germany, Croatia and Hungary, but a major part of Serbia became a collaborating state, even less able to act independently than the regime on occupied France called 'Vichy France' (as its collaborator government was based in the city). The Serbian Prime Minister, Milan Nedić had to work with German military administrators alongside his own officials. He was a former Chief of Staff of the army and war minister, who was dismissed from the Royal Government in 1940, for advocating peace with Germany.

The pre-war province of Serbia was the home of approximately 150,000 Roma. About 10,000 used to live in the capital, Belgrade. In May 1941, a local but less severe version of Nazi racial policies were applied in the country. Both Roma and Jews were 'unfit' if they had at least three grandparents from those communities. Sanctions were also applied to spouses of Roma and Jews, who were Serbian by birth, but Roma who could prove they and their families had been sedentary since 1850, and that they had been 'integrated' into Serbian society, were exempt from these racial hygiene laws.

Those who were legally identified as Roma, however, were required to wear yellow armbands with a large letter 'Z' for *Zigeuner*. Roma professionals and office holders were dismissed from their positions. Roma between the ages of 14 and 60, regardless of gender, were to become forced labourers. They were banned from public places such as markets, restaurants, public baths, theatres, and had to observe a curfew between the hours of 8:00pm and 6:00am. As in Croatia, all Romani property was confiscated.

Many of the Serbian Roma were taken as slave labourers and helped to build concentration camps such as Sabač, Crveni Krst near Niš, and Jajinici, near Pančevo. They were even taken across the border to areas of Serbia that had been seized by Croatia, such as Semlin-Sajmište, which was located at the former Belgrade fairground site near Zemun. Like the Jasenovač in Croatia, the camp at Semlin was infamous in the former Yugoslavia. In Belgrade and other major cities, Roma were rounded up and placed in neighbourhood collection centres, from which later they would be transferred to main camps like Semlin and Banjica. In the camps, Roma would die from starvation and suicide, or while they were being rounded up, and their bodies were often left in unmarked graves. In total, up to 20,000 Roma were executed in Serbia itself.

Roma and Jews were also held as hostages against partisan action. At first this meant that for every German soldier killed by the partisans, 100 hostages were to be executed. The German military commander wrote to a friend in Gdansk that on 12th and 13th October 1941, 2,000 Jews and 200 Gypsies had been shot in accordance with this arbitrary rule. More Romani people were arrested as hostages in Belgrade on 29th October 1941, some 250 in all. Eventually the ratio was reduced in December because of a shortage of hostages. The Germans moved on to looking for Roma still at large to shoot in reprisal. On one occasion, some 250 Roma travelling in waggons were shot while their waggons and possessions were burned or stolen. As only men were kept as hostages, the Nazis dealt with their wives and children by putting them in the concentration camp at Semlin, which at one point held around 600 Roma. Olga Milanovic recalls:

"I was only five years old when our family was arrested in Belgrade and taken to the camp at Semlin. My father died later; I believe in Germany. After our arrest I was in the camp for three months. They gave us rotten potatoes and water soup. The ration was one hundred grams per day."[18]

In 1942 a 'gas van' was sent by the Chief of Gestapo in Serbia, Heinrich Müller, to kill the Jews in Sajmište, which was also used for Roma. Often loaded with women and children, the gas van was driven to the woods where they would be gassed and buried, while the possessions of the dead would be taken and distributed among the German civilian population by the German Welfare Agency.

A German military administrator once claimed that Serbia was the first country to remove all Jews and Roma from society; but probably they only managed to catch about a third of Serbia's Roma. Some managed to pass for ethnic Serbians and other nationalities, others fled and hid, or had been hidden, while others joined the resistance such as those led by Communist Party head, Josip Broz Tito. Some Roma even formed their own resistance groups, separately from the Serbian Royalist and Nationalist Četniks and partisans, and sometimes even fought them, as well as the Axis powers. As a result, because of their contribution to the resistance, Josip Broz Tito, the leader of the Communist partisans, argued that Roma should get their own autonomous region around Skopje, but the Macedonian Communist party argued this would splinter their own territory, and instead encouraged Roma participation in municipal politics.

North Macedonia

North Macedonia was split between Bulgaria and Albania during the Second World War, with most of the territory falling under Bulgarian rule. As we have seen, Bulgarian racism was hierarchical, traditional, and exploitative rather than genocidal, and the Bulgarian authorities often dragged their feet in responding to Nazi pressure. A deportation in May 1943 of Jews from Skopje, however, acted as a 'wake-up call' to any who thought genocidal persecution would be delayed indefinitely, and Roma, Macedonians, and Jews joined Tito's Communist partisans in large numbers. Some Roma were caught by German security police as the war progressed, but many Roma went unrecognised by SS and Gestapo officers and informers, as they passed for Turks and Albanians. Many Roma were Muslim landowners, and workers in farms. Also, in the towns, with the police turning a blind eye, most Roma identified themselves during a census as other minorities, not wanting to stir issues with Turks and Albanians. Those Roma who could not hide their heritage, or because their identities have been betrayed by others, had to wear yellow armbands, and some were taken as labourers to Bulgaria and other places. A Roma circus family who had been earlier performing in Turkey and in Bulgaria, was arrested and transported to Crveni Krst and Semlin, and eventually to Auschwitz, where they died.

In North Macedonia today, the dominant narrative of wartime remains that of the heroic resistance of the partisans to fascist aggression by Nazi Germans, Royalist Bulgarians, and *Četnik* (fascist) Serbs. When an earthquake destroyed much of the Romani quarter of Skopje, the North Macedonian capital, in 1963, a new self-governing municipality was created, with aid from the U.S.A., in Shuto Orizari, which became the nearest possible to a practical fulfilment of Tito's promise of regional autonomy. By the late 1960s it was a beacon of hope for Romani activists across Europe, and its then MP in the Macedonian regional parliament, Abdi Faik, was one of the founding leaders attending the First World Romani Congress in April 1971.

When activists from the marginalised Roma minorities from Western Europe visited "Shutka" it shook them to be in a place where you could walk in the street, and almost everyone you saw was Romani. If you went in the shops, you spoke Romani to buy soap, or bread, or a packet of tea. If you went to the Town Hall, the town councillors were Romani, the receptionists, and even the policeman standing outside were Romani. For the first time in their lives, they were in a place where being Romani was just normal. Their whole conception of what Roma could achieve was revolutionised. And they never heard that frequently repeated phrase that Western Roma, and patronising *gadjó* friends used to recite, "You don't find Gypsies fighting wars!", even though some of the visiting Romani activists were army veterans themselves. Instead, they found that every household had stories of bravery and fighting by its older members during the 1939 to 1945 war, often coupled with the memory of grandparents fighting the Turks in 1912. This may explain why the public discourse there is not so much one of victimhood, but a triumphant, "We were the ones who fought them off!" There has sometimes been no representative of the Macedonian government at the commemoration of the European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day, officially declared by the EU in 2015, even though one of the three groups claiming to be the legitimate successor of the International Romani Union is headquartered in Skopje, led by Zoran Dimov. As in much of the rest of Europe, there remain structural inequalities affecting Romani people, but even if it is possible to over-idealise the Macedonian situation, it remains the case that North Macedonia has one of the most vigorous Roma civil societies in the world, and that is both rooted in the memory of active, ultimately successful resistance to fascist aggression, and was a key impetus to the world-wide Roma movement's demand for Romani Holocaust reparations.

Montenegro

After the capitulation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1941, the territory of Montenegro was divided between Italy and Albania, and the treatment of Roma was like that in those countries. After Mussolini's first forced resignation and arrest in 1943, Germany effectively took over the administration of Italy and all its territories, and Albanian occupied Montenegro. They rescued Mussolini from imprisonment to become their puppet dictator of the "Republic of Salo", and began to pursue Nazi genocidal policies against Roma and Jews, though not with the same level of resources as when they seemed to be winning the war. During 1943-44, Roma were sent to concentration camps in Yugoslavia, Buchenwald, and elsewhere. As in Macedonia and Serbia, Roma were among those who joined the partisan resistance.

Kosovo-Metohija

Kosovo-Metohija is territory that has been an unstable borderland between Albanian and Serbian speaking lands for centuries. Metohija is a small, largely Serb-populated county in the south-west where Serbian monasteries encouraged Serb settlement in pre-Ottoman, early medieval times. It was awarded to Montenegro after the Serbian-Turkish war of 1912, and so joined the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. In 1941, however, when Germany conquered Yugoslavia, not only Kosovo, but also Metohija were awarded to the Italian-influenced Albanian nationalist government, to assure their loyalty to the Axis powers and especially Nazi Germany. Under this regime, the genocide of Jews and Roma was not a priority, but for right-wing Catholic Croatians, extermination of the Serbs was. In 1942, the 'puppet' prime minister of the Albanian nationalist government visited Kosovo and proclaimed, "We should endeavour to ensure that the Serb population of Kosovo be… cleansed of them, and all Serbs who had been living there for centuries should be termed colonialists, and sent to concentration camps in Albania. The Serb settlers should be killed."[19] Many were killed; most were expelled to Serbia proper, though when the Germans took over Albania and Kosovo, after the capitulation of the Kingdom of Italy in 1943, some small border areas with majority Serb populations, such as Mitrovica, were transferred to the Serb collaborationist territory, where the Nazi SS had a great deal of control. The *Ballisti* Albanian fascist regime which nominally took over administration of most of the rest of Kosovo, however, were more than willing to co-operate with the SS in anti-Roma and anti-Jewish actions.

The witness of one Roma, Raif Maljoku, is that Albanian *Ballisti* fascists, and SS troops, compelled the wearing of yellow armbands with a 'Z' on them for Roma they identified, and sent them to work as forced labour on the land of collaborationists in both Kosovo and Albania, making those who had traditional Serbian-style moustaches shave them off. Those Roma identified to wear 'Z' armbands were forced to work for the fascist military and to build barracks, to carry food supplies, and munitions. In 1942, about 200 or 300 hundred Roma were made to perform forced labour driving cows and sheep for fascist militia members, from the town of Mitrovica. While the militia members rode horses, they beat the Roma continuously to make them walk faster. Travelling for three to four months, the Roma had to walk for hundreds of kilometres across the mountains and into Greece. Some of these Roma managed to desert and contact the partisans, but Roma deserters who were caught, and were believed to have helped the partisans, were beaten to extract information, and then hanged in public in Greece, in front of the other Roma and local people. Even in Mitrovica, there was no general genocide of Roma, and oral history attributes this to the local community leadership of the Roma, a certain Ljatif Sucuri.

To understand this, we must look at the more violent side of the Albanian *Besa* honour-code, which westerners have sometimes called the 'blood-feud', the *Code of Lek Dukajin* mentioned earlier. It should be noted that this strong culture of personal responsibility for ensuring justice amongst Albanian Roma is very different from the collective responsibility for justice and order amongst most Rumanian, Serbian and Bulgarian Roma, and is more like the personal systems of securing justice practiced by British *Romanichals* and Finnish *Kaale*[20] This difference of cultural understanding about responsibility for justice continues to cause confusion, not just in relations between Roma groups in countries of the former Yugoslavia, but in international Romani political organisations more generally.

Such values remained commonplace in Albanian-speaking countries. Every adult Albanian and Albanian Roma is careful not to offer such offence to another, that the other feels that obligation to exact revenge, even if it means someone will take revenge in turn. And so, the account given by Kuna Cevcet (recorded by Kenrick and Puxon) of such a threat given by Ljatif Sucuri, though it sounds melodramatic, is believable. In August or September 1943, the local police chief in Mitrovica was still Albanian. When the order to kill all the Roma arrived (or perhaps to deport them to a death camp), Sucuri actually confronted him, physically burnt the paper with the order on it, and threatened that if any attempt was made to carry out the order, or he was arrested, other Roma would kill the police chief and burn down the houses of ethnic Albanians as he had burnt the paper. To the Albanian police chief, this would have been a credible threat. Supposedly at Sucuri's suggestion, he reported that there were no Roma in the town, and those supposed to be so by Serb and German fascists were in fact Muslim Albanians. So, the only Roma killed were those who were fighting for, or accused of helping, the Communist partisans.

After Bulgaria had changed sides in September 1944, its army joined with the Soviet Red army to occupy most of what became the Yugoslav Federation, blocking the German withdrawal from Greece. They worked in co-operation with both Albanian and Yugoslav Communist partisans, promising the Kosovo Albanian partisans self-determination, a promise that was withdrawn in November when Kosovo was declared a province of the Serbian Republic within the Yugoslav Federation. There was a rebellion of Kosovo Albanians under Shaban Polluza, who held out against integration with Serbia for about six months.[21]

During this chaotic period, Ljatif Sucuri was arrested by Yugoslav partisans and charged with having been a fascist collaborator. His supporters say that he was denounced by real collaborators, to cover up their own activities. He was shot in 1945 without any proper investigation. He was just 30 years old. On the other hand, oral history clearly shows he remained on public speaking terms with the fascist administration of Mitrovica, which may have seemed damning enough to the Yugoslav partisans. In some ways his defence may be seen as paralleling that of the Serbian collaborationist Prime Minister, Milan Nedič, whose defence was that without the collaboration into which he was forced, millions of Serbs might have been slaughtered by Croats and Albanians. The Communists, with the support of the Allies, executed Nedič the next year in 1946. Although the causes and cases of these two men were perhaps very different, their memory remained alive for their admirers, and still plays a part in regional conflicts. After the collapse of the Yugoslav Federation, their civil war was one of those which proved that those who thought that after the lessons of the Nazi genocide had sunk in and this could never happen again, were just mistaken.

Greece

Like all the other countries in this section, Greece was once part of the Ottoman Empire, but it was the first to liberate any of its territory, starting in 1821 to 1828, though it has still recovered only a fraction of the territory once ruled and populated by Greeks. The headquarters of the Patriarch (Head) of the Greek Orthodox church is still located in the Turkish city of Istanbul, which it still considers to be Constantinople, once the capital of the Byzantine Empire, May 330 to May 1453. We must bear in mind, for Greece as for all these countries, that their present society is shaped by their past before independence. Scholars call this *post-coloniality*. They tend to see their history as heroic resistance to a foreign empire, and themselves as victims who could not possibly victimise others. Nationalism becomes toxically linked to ideas about 'freedom' and 'democracy' in a way that is rarely favourable to Roma and Jews, but nonetheless has historically provoked Roma and Jewish political activism to develop their own counter-nationalisms. For centuries, Greeks stood high in the ethnic hierarchy of the Ottoman Empire. Since independence however, anti-Turkish sentiment has been the default position of Greek nationalism and governments, and the upper levels of Greek society, and other European powers, have been judged in relation to this conflict. Ethnic minorities, such as Jews and Roma, *Ashkali* and Egyptians (*Yifti* in Greek) could be suspected of disloyalty for not being Orthodox in religion,

especially in the Muslim communities of Greek Thrace – or even for being Turkish, Bulgarian, or Rumanian, rather than Greek.

Faced by the incompetent 1939 invasion by Italy and the puppet Albanian government, Greece fought back and by 1941 had taken Albanian territory. Germany had, somewhat reluctantly, come to Italy's rescue, and by promising Bulgaria permanent additions to their territory, incentivised the collaborationist monarchist-nationalist Bulgarian army to do much of the work of subduing Greece. As we have seen, this Bulgarian army included not a few Roma soldiers, both officers and men. So, although the Bulgarian authorities responded in a dilatory fashion, aided by Greek collaborators in the pursuit of Jews, they did not pursue Roma as such, although as we have seen, some German atrocities against Roma took place on Greek soil. One of the best documented took place about 15 kilometres from Levadia, near the border with North Macedonia, in 1942. Ioannis Vrissakis, President of the Pan-Hellenic Cultural Association of Roma, told the story to Romani Professor of Linguistics, Ian Hancock in 1988, and left a personal written testimony with the Wiener Library in London.[22]

In 1942, when he was around 16 years old, and working as a plumber and metalworker, he was in a place that was besieged, and when the Germans captured everyone, they interrogated them, and decided the five Roma present were harmless, and told them to leave. But before they could go, a Greek collaborator, dressed in traditional Greek costume, came in and told the Germans they must be spies, because they were itinerants moving from place-to-place. They were taken separately to Levadia, where five of them were thrown into a tiny cell guarded by SS men, who knew perfectly well who Roma were and why they didn't like them. To torment them they would scrub their faces with bits of brick, telling them they were trying to make them look white. Things got a bit better when Austrian troops replaced the SS men, but still there were some three hundred Roma among the hostages sharing cramped quarters with body lice, barely kept alive by soup rations. "Every time a German officer was killed, fifty of us were taken outside and shot." Eventually, however, they were befriended by a Rumanian interrogator married to a Greek, who was befriended by Vrissakis' mother, who visited her and told her fortune with tea leaves. One Wednesday they were told they would be released the following Friday.

From September 1943 till they left in October 1944, the Germans controlled only lowland areas of Greece, fighting the partisans who controlled the mountains. They still shot Roma in revenge - Vrissakis knew 17 Roma who were dragged out of their homes in Petralona, an area at the edge of Athens, but three survived, grievously sick, as the German left straight after without checking the dead. Any orders to transport Roma to German concentration camps went disregarded; the Germans could barely get themselves out of the country, let alone hundreds of prisoners.

The Allies ensured that the Communists did not dominate the post-war government as in Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania, and Yugoslavia, but that a coalition government was formed under the Greek king, who was returned from exile in Cairo. This situation broke down, and a civil war ensued from 1946 to 1949, and British intervention ensured that an anti-Communist government was victorious. This was unstable and Greece has lurched between different socialist and conservative governments, with a period of dictatorship in the 1980's under a military *junta*. Roma in Greece post-war were subsequently subject to marginalisation, discrimination, and neglect, as in West European countries, rather than forced assimilation and sporadic discrimination as in the Communist countries, where a small, educated Romani *nomenklatura* came into being.

[1] Maximoff, M. (forthcoming), *Putin t'aves skepime*, London: Francis Boutle Ltd. With an English translation by T. A. Acton. His Romani language version of this (to be published soon) is more muscular and nuanced than the French version.

[2] "Skepime" comes from the same root as "escape", which is also an English borrowing from Latin.

[3] Solonari, V. (2013), "Ethnic Cleansing or 'Crime Prevention'? Deportation of Romanian Roma", *in* Weiss-Wendt, A. [ed.], *The Nazi Genocide of the Roma. Reassessment and Commemoration*, New York & Oxford: Berghahn Books, pp.96–119

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[10] Of course, since Roma intermarried with Dom, this enables racist geneticists to find DNA 'evidence' in old bones of a so-called Roma arrival in Europe from before Romani ethnicity and language actually came into being! This is because their racist mind-set does not envisage ethnic groups having in-marriage from other groups.

[11] Reinhartz, D. (1999), "Unmarked graves: the destruction of the Yugoslav Roma in the Balkan Holocaust, 1941-1945", *Journal of Genocide Research*, vol.1, no.1, pp. 81–89.

[12] Korb, A. (2013), "Ustaša Mass Violence Against Gypsies in Croatia, 1941-1942", *in* Weiss-Wendt, A. [ed.], *The Nazi Genocide of the Roma. Reassessment and Commemoration*, New York & Oxford: Berghahn Books, pp.72–95..

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[15] The Auschwitz Institute for the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities (2022), *The Roma Holocaust/Roma Genocide in Southeastern Europe: Between Oblivion, Acknowledgment, and Distortion*, Boston, Mass.: The Roma Program at the François Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights, Harvard University

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Select Glossary

Terms used in the HMDT Romani Holocaust (Porrajmos) learning resource.

Autocracy

[or-tok-krass-sea] political and legal power held by an autocrat, a single, unelected, direct ruler, king, queen, emperor, or empress, often with ideas of 'divine' (God-given) power, within an *autocratic* system, e.g., an empire such as the British, Russian, Austria-Hungarian, or German Empires before the First World War, 1914 to 1918

Balkans

[bal-cans] the region of South-eastern Europe, sometimes referred to as 'the Balkan peninsula', that is historically associated with the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, and that included Albania, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hercegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Rumania, Serbia, Slovenia, Turkey (European); now called South-east Europe or South-eastern Europe

'Dark continent'

a phrase coined in the age of colonial exploration and imperial conquest to describe areas or regions where Europeans were few and knowledge of the peoples, traditions, languages, cultures, and beliefs of the indigenous inhabitants were unknown

Dehumanisation

[dee-hoo-man-ize-a-shun] the process of reducing the elements of a person, or community's humanity in an effort to degrade them and promote highly divisive, discriminatory, and destructive discourses that are frequently part of the process of genocide

Dictator

[dik-tae-torr] originally Latin, meaning 'given unlimited power for the duration of an emergency' (e.g., Julius Caesar), but later a political leader who takes power during a crisis or state of emergency and who acts without limits on that power; Adolf Hitler was a prime example, 1933 to 1945

Extermination

[exterm-in-a-shun] the murder, usually on a mass scale, and then destruction of the physical remains, of groups of people, animals, insects, etc. Extermination of Jews and 'Gypsies' in Nazi Germany and the occupied territories, 1939 to 1945

Multiculturalism

[mol-tee-cult-ural-izm] the concept that a variety of cultures, that stem from both the majority and minority communities, co-exist in a way that enriches and benefits all, through a process of creating wider understanding through positive engagement – sharing religious festivals, dance and performance events, theatre and literature, language and culture – that both build respect and appreciation, and strengthen social cohesion across all society

Pluralism

[ploo-rall-izm] like multiculturalism, pluralism suggests that widely differing views and opinions can be held by actors and agents in a political society, with sufficient respect shared between them all that each individual or community can be accommodated, if not always agreed or adopted. Pluralist democracy is the basis for the political system of the U.K. and many other states

Polarisation

[poll-aar-ize-a-shun] the term to describe directly opposing and extreme arguments, positions, or opinions in attitudes, debates, political discussions, or societal changes, e.g., in Nazi Germany 1933 to 1945 when extreme ideas (ideologies) became prevalent about 'race biology'

Populist

[pop-you-list] usually political; catering to popular and stereotypes, opinions, misrepresentations, and so-called 'common sense', and creating a public discourse (in popular media) that reinforces these, before inserting them into legislation, strategies, and action plans in government; in Nazi Germany 1933 to 1945, populist measures against Jews and 'Gyspies' were used to justify their extermination

Porrajmos

[po-rai-mos] the term, coined by Romani scholar, Professor Ian Hancock, to describe the complete destruction of the Sinti and Roma people on Nazi Germany and the occupied territories, 1936 to 1945

Sá o mudaripen

[sah-oh-moo-dar-ee-pen] a term meaning "the murder of us" in modern Romani, used by those scholars and activists as an alternative to *Porrajmos*

Shoah

[sho-aah] the mass destruction of the Jewish people of Europe, 1939 to 1945 by the Nazi and other fascist regimes, as referred to in Hebrew by modern Jewish scholars and researchers of the Holocaust

Sultan

[sool-taan] fem. Sultana [sool-taan-ah] the ruler of an Islamic polity, state, or empire

Symbolisation

also 'symbolization' [sim-bell-ize-a-shun] the act of making something, an object, person, or group, stand for something else; e.g., in the early Christian church, a ship symbolised the Church, and a fish symbolised Jesus Christ (based upon the word, ICTHYS, from the Greek meaning 'fish', using the first letters from 'Jesus Christ, God's Son, Saviour' in Greek, 'Iesous Christos Theou Yios Soter', I, Ch, Th, Y, S). In Islam, a crescent symbolises Muslim faith; amongst Romani people, a wheel symbolises both Roma and mobility or movement of Roma

Tsar

[tz-aa-r] the ruler of Muscovite Russia, from 1453CE onwards; the conquest of Byzantium by the Ottomans in May 1453 saw the notion of the transfer of Christian Orthodox imperial rule from Constantinople – New Rome – to Moscow 'as the Third Rome', ruled by Caesar, from which 'tsar' is derived

Images

Figure 1:
Bryncrug Gypsies at the Dolgellau Folk Festival, 3 July 1958

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Geoff Charles

Figure 2:
Gypsies (peg makers) camping near Swansea, 1st July 1953

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Figure 3:
Slovakian Roma musicians, on their wagon, August 1939.

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Figure 4:
Hungarian Roma, 1940

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Figure 5:
Balkan Roma WWII, 1940

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Figure 6:
Turkish Romani Family, 1940

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Figure 7:
Hungarian Roma, 1940

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Figure 8:
Hungarian Roma Family; Roma under German Authority, 1940

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Figure 9:
Roma in Constanța, Rumania, WWII, 1940

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Figure 10:
Balkan Roma with linen spindles, 1940

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Figure 11:
Ostfront, 1940

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Figure 12:
Gas chamber at Auschwitz - Birkenau I (Oświęcim, Poland 2014)

Paul Arps

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Figure 13:
Fritz; Taken from the Documentation Centre Exhibition in Cologne about Roma and Sinti

Photographer: E Walker

Date: 2008

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Figure 14:
Fritz Handprint; Taken from the Documentation Centre Exhibition in Cologne about Roma and Sinti

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Figure 15:
Auschwitz (Brushes)

Photographer: Philip Milne

Date: 2010

Figure 16:
The Historical Museum of the Liberation of Tasso

Photographer: Simone Ramella

Date: 2017

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Figure 17:
Bernd Schwabe

Sinti Family Memorial, Hannover

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Figure 18:
Auschwitz (Shoes)

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Figure 19:
Auschwitz (Glasses)

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Figure 20:
Auschwitz (Sign)

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Figure 21:
Crematorium oven no.2, Buchenwald - Concentration Camp

Daniel Mennerich

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Figure 22:
Auschwitz (Railtrack Approach)

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Figure 23:
Gypsy mother and child at Constantinople; artist Miner Kilbourne Kellogg, born Manlius Square, NY 1814-died Toledo, OH 1889

Smithsonian American Art Museum, Bequest of Martha F. Butler

Figure 24:
Gypsy dervish at Constantinople; artist Miner Kilbourne Kellogg, born Manlius Square, NY 1814-died Toledo, OH 1889

Smithsonian American Art Museum, Bequest of Martha F. Butler

Figure 25:
Gypsy at Constantinople; artist Miner Kilbourne Kellogg, born Manlius Square, NY 1814-died Toledo, OH 1889

Smithsonian American Art Museum, Bequest of Martha F. Butler

Figure 26:
A Gypsy cimbalom player from Galanta; Stock, Johann Martin, 1742-1800 (Engraver)

Music Division, The New York Public Library. "Gypsy cimbalom player from Galanta" The New York Public Library Digital Collections. 1776.

Figure 27:
A Gypsy viola player from Galanta; Stock, Johann Martin, 1742-1800 (Engraver)

Music Division, The New York Public Library. "Gypsy cimbalom player from Galanta" The New York Public Library Digital Collections. 1776

Figure 28:
"Germany, the beautiful travel country." Coloured pictorial map on sheet 59x82, folded into 22.5x10.5, with inset map of Europe showing location of Nazi Germany, promoting tourism. Showing major cities, historical people and places, places of interest, agriculture, industry, sports, Berlin and 1936 Olympic Games. Nazi flags in Nuremberg Munich and Obersalzburg. On verso: Map of Germany, showing roads and railways, inset map of air routes, and 12 pages of text and tourist information. Date estimated, but issued in other languages. See: www.davidrumsey.com. #8587.000 (Italian), and 8880.003 (German). Includes decorative border and compass rose. Relief shown pictorially and by contours.

Reichsbahnzentrale fur den Deutschen Reiseverkehr/German Railways Information Bureau, c.1936, Berlin; David Rumsey Map Historical Map Collection

Figure 29:
"Germany, Germany", Coloured pictorial map on sheet 59x82, folded into 22.5x10.5, with inset map of Europe showing location of Nazi Germany, promoting tourism. Showing major cities, historical people and places, places of interest, agriculture, industry, sports, Berlin and 1936 Olympic Games. Nazi flags in Nuremberg Munich and Obersalzburg. On verso: Map of Germany, showing roads and railways, inset map of air routes, and 12 pages of text and tourist information. Date estimated, but issued in other languages. See: www.davidrumsey.com. #8587.000 (Italian), and 8880.003 (German). Includes decorative border and compass rose. Relief shown pictorially and by contours.

Reichsbahnzentrale fur den Deutschen Reiseverkehr/German Railways Information Bureau, c.1936, Berlin; David Rumsey Historical Map Collection

Figure 30:
Nazi propaganda; "This is how the warmongers would divide Germany. This map is from a document found in Paris, showing one of the Franco-English war aims disclosed to American Secretary of State Sumner Welles by French Minister-President Reynaud." Photo by Heinrich Hoffmann

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Picture Collection, The New York Public Library. "This is how the warmongers would divide Germany. This map is from a document found in Paris, showing one of the Franco-English war aims disclosed to American Secretary of State Sumner Welles by French Minister-President Reynaud." The New York Public Library Digital Collections. 1940.

Figure 31:
Auschwitz (Arch)

Photographer: Philip Milne

Date: 2010

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Figure 32:
At a general membership meeting of the NSDAP in Krakow, General Governor and Reichs Minister Dr. Frank announced that, by decision of the Führer, the General Government (of Poland) would cease to be treated as an occupied territory, and instead become a part of the Greater German Reich, c.1940, photo Heinrich Hoffmann

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Picture Collection, The New York Public Library. "At a general membership meeting of the NSDAP in Krakow, General Governor and Reichs Minister Dr. Frank announced that, by decision of the Führer, the General Government (of Poland) would cease to be treated as an occupied territory, and instead become a part of the Greater German Reich." *The New York Public Library Digital Collections*. 1940.

Figure 33:
Roma man writing "Romany" and "Gypsy" on a blackboard; Alexander Alland, c.1938

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Photography Collection, The New York Public Library. "Roma man writing "Romany" and "Gypsy" on a blackboard" The New York Public Library Digital Collections. 1938.

Figure 34:
Douglas and Elizabeth Hern and their eight children, at Bala on their way to Swansea, 22 June 1951

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Geoff Charles

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Figure 35:
Auschwitz survivor Walter Stanoski Winter died on the 19th November 2012 in Hamburg. He was born on the 19th June 1919 in Wittmund.

Photo: German Sinti and Roma Documentation Centre

Figure 36:
Sofia Taikon family portrait

Figure 37:
Auschwitz (Railtrack Approach)

Photographer: Philip Milne

Date: 2010

Legal: Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 2.0 Generic (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Figure 38:
Ceija Stojka, "The final destruction of the 'Gypsy family camp, Auschwitz, 1944" gouache on paper, 2011, Vienna Museum

Figure 39:
Clifford and Lias, sons of Oliver

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Figure 40:
Oliver Lee

May 1913, Llangollen

Used by kind permission © NLW, 2023

Figure 41:
Roma group gathered around a table; King Kaslof at right; Alexander Alland, c.1938

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Photography Collection, The New York Public Library. "Roma group gathered around a table; King Kaslof at right" The New York Public Library Digital Collections. 1938.

Figure 42:
Roma children eating baked beans; Alexander Alland, c.1938

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Photography Collection, The New York Public Library. "Roma children eating baked beans" The New York Public Library Digital Collections. 1938.

Figure 43:
A narrow boat run by 'ditch mumpers', or Bargees, River Lea, Edmonton Lock, London (2019). Britain's transport network during WW2 depended upon large numbers of Bargees transferring war materiel along canals and rivers, to supply the war economy, a contribution largely unrecognised following 1945. 2015, photo Adrian Marsh

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Figure 44:
Sofia Taikon's testimony of tragedy, loss, and ultimately survival is one of the most moving and accessible personal stories of Roma resilience ever produced. Originally written in Swedish and Romanës, the graphic book was translated in 2012 into English, by Jana Elliot with an afterword, NO Gypsies Served' by Adrian Marsh. The original work was a partnership between Sofia, Gunilla Lundgren (writer), and Amanda Eriksson (artist).

Gunilla Lundgren, Sofia Taikon, Amanda Ericsson, Jana Eliot, Adrian Marsh; Books, London, 2012, lit_00145. Licensed by Gunilla Lundgren. Licensed under: Rights of Use. Provided by: Gunilla Lundgren – Private Archive

Figure 45:
Turkish Romani (Romanlar) graffiti artist, Ergün Demirci (Ergün the Blacksmith), responds to Romani Resistance Day, 2/3 August 2015, by creating a work about Rose Ottoberg, a young Sinti girl who fought against the Nazi SS camp guards at Auschwitz Birkenau II death camp when the 'Zigeunerfamilienlager' (Gypsy Family Camp) was dismantled and the inmates exterminated. Photo by Adrian Marsh, Ergün Demirci

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Figure 46:
Protest of citizens of Budapest against whitewashing the role of Hungary in Holocaust

Photographer: Karli Iskakova

Attribution-ShareAlike 2.0 Generic (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Date: 2014

Figure 47:
Auschwitz (Railtrack Approach)

Photographer: Philip Milne

Date: 2010

Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 2.0 Generic (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Figure 48:
Oliver Lee, 20th May 1913, Llangollen

Used by kind permission © NLW, 2023

Timeline Images

1783
Blouse worn by a Slovakian member of the *Lovari* group. During the Holocaust, members of the *Lovari* group were sent to workcamps in Slovakia; the grandfather "Makula" died in a workcamp.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection

1787
Blouse worn by Julia Weinrich, member of Czech-Moravian nomadic Romani group. The Weinrichs family was sent to Auschwitz, where Julia Weinrich's cousin was killed.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection

1793
Horseshoe with nails, c. 1940s, from Romani man Kolomon Gabor, from town Spissky Stourtok near Spis, Slovakia. Gabor was in work camps in 1942 and 1943.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection

1830
Small, hand drawn wooden wagon used by a Sinti family

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of Rita Prigmore

1835
Belonged to Toma Racloro, a Rumanian Roma. When he was deported from Baranesti (near Slatina) to Transnistria in 1942, he left some cookware with a Rumanian peasant. Toma died; after 1945, his wife got the pots back from the peasant.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection

1850
Accordian which belonged to a Rumanian Romani

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection

1855-1864
Wagon Wheel

1863
Hair comb used by a German Sinti woman

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of Melanie Spitta

1869
Calderi Brooch

1871
Vardo Unders

1876
Drinking trough used in a Romani encampment
Object | Accession Number: 1989.332.1

Drinking trough used by Josef Balogh in Betlanovce, Slovakia, in 1944. in a Romani encampment.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection

1879
Pair of handmade wooden soled suede boots from Mauthausen concentration camp, 1948
Object | Accession Number: 2004.705.3 a-b

Pair of handmade leather ankle boots with wooden soles made at Mauthausen concentration camp. Soon after Nazi Germany incorporated Austria in March 1938, SS Chief Himmler chose a site for a camp to incarcerate Austrian traitors near the town of Mauthausen. The first prisoners were sent there in August. Until the war's end on May 7, 1945, Mauthausen inmates chiefly consisted of convicted criminals, "asocials," such as Roma and Sinti, political opponents, including anti-Franco Spanish Republicans, and religious conscientious objectors, such as Jehovah's Witnesses.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of the Estate of Robert L. White

1886
Hand-wrought horseshoe nail used by a Romani
Object | Accession Number: 1989.270.8

Horseshoe nail from Romani man Kolomon Gabor, from town Spissky Stourtok near Spis, Slovakia. Gabor was in work camps in 1942 and 1943.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection

1890
Scarf worn by a German Sinti woman
Object | Accession Number: 1989.311.6

The scarf belonged to Meerweib Metback.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of Melanie Spitta

1899
Accordian which belonged to a Rumanian Romani
Object | Accession Number: 1989.319.3 a-b

Accordian which belonged to Gheorge Cioba, a Rumanian Romani, from 1942-1945. This accordian stayed with Gheorge Cioaba from 1942-1945.

Date in use approximately 1920-1929

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection

1904
Violin used by a Sinti musician

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of Rita Prigmore

1905
Violin case used by a Sinti musician

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of Rita Prigmore

1906
Silver coin bracelet worn by a German Sinti woman
Object | Accession Number: 1990.121.2

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of Melanie Keck Spitta

1907
Small hooked rug used in the wagon of a Sinti family
Object | Accession Number: 2005.453.7

Small patterned hooked rug used as a shoe mat in the wagon of Rita Prigmore and her family when she was a child in Wurzberg, Germany, after World War II. The Winterstein family had traveled widely in Western and Central Europe until the Nazi regime restricted Sinti migrations in the 1930s. Rita's parents, Theresia Winterstein and Gabriel Reinhardt, met in 1941 when they both worked at the Stadttheater in Wurzburg. Persecution of the Sinti was escalating. They were no longer allowed to work at the theater. Several members of Theresia's family were forced to agree to sterilization. Theresia and Gabriel decided to have a child, and Rita and her twin sister, Rolanda, were born in 1943. The infants were taken from their parents by Nazi eugenicists and used in medical experiments. Only Rita survived and was returned to her parents in 1944 by the German Red Cross.
Date use: 1945-1950

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of Rita Prigmore

1920
Monument to the murdered Sinti and Roma

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1922
Auschwitz (Brushes)

Photographer: Philip Milne

Date: 2010

Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 2.0 Generic (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

1927
Gas chamber at Auschwitz I (Oświęcim, Poland 2014)

Paul Arps

Attribution 2.0 Generic (CC BY 2.0)

1928
Title: Auschwitz (Glasses)

Photographer: Philip Milne

Date: 2010

Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 2.0 Generic (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

1934
The Holocaust of the Gypsies. Gypsies' memorial

by Zingaro

Attribution 2.0 Generic (CC BY 2.0)

1935
Bauhaus / Albers

1935
Bauhaus / Delaunay

1938
Silver coin bracelet worn by a German Sinti woman
Object | Accession Number: 1990.121.2

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of Melanie Keck Spitta

1938
Hairbrush with a metal swastika, 1903
Object | Accession Number: 2004.705.9

Floreloid brand natural bristle hairbrush with a small metal swastika nailed to the wooden handle. This style was marketed as a military hair brush with a sterling silver decorative crest mounted on the handle. The product was popular in the United States at the beginning of the 20th century. This brush may have belonged to Ernst Kaltenbrunner, Chief of the Security Police known as the Gestapo in Nazi Germany. He was the most senior member of the SS captured alive after the defeat of Germany in May 1945. He was directly involved with the implementation of the Final Solution and operation of the concentration camp system. Kaltenbrunner was found guilty of war crimes by the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, sentenced to death, and hanged October 16, 1946.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of the Estate of Robert L. White

1939
Shoes

Object | Accession Number: 1989.246.9 a-b

The shoes were worn by a German Romani of the Sinti group before and during the Holocaust.

Date use: 1930-1939

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of Melanie Keck Spitta

1940
Charred electrical insulator from Auschwitz found by a Sinti inmate
Object | Accession Number: 1987.75.1

Partial charred porcelain electrical insulator from Auschwitz concentration camp acquired postwar by Hans Braun, a German Sinti man who was imprisoned there with his family from March 1943 to May 1944. It was the type used to connect electrical wires to the concrete fence posts around the camp. In early 1940, Hans, a forced laborer, broke a machine at a factory and was accused of sabotage. The Gestapo came after him and he fled Bernau and went into hiding. Hans was arrested twice, but escaped, until March 1943, when he was deported to Auschwitz, where he was reunited with his family in the Roma camp.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of Hans Braun

1942
Blouse worn by a member of a Czech-Moravian nomadic Romani group
Object | Accession Number: 1989.270.2

1939

Blouse worn by Julia Weinrich, member of Czech-Moravian nomadic Romani group. The Weinrichs family was sent to Auschwitz, where Julia Weinrich's cousin was killed.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection

1943
Black velvet embroidered blouse worn by a *Lovari* woman

Object | Accession Number: 1989.270.1

1938-39

Blouse worn by a Slovakian member of the *Lovari* group. During the Holocaust, members of the *Lovari* group were sent to workcamps in Slovakia; the grandfather "Makula" died in a workcamp.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection

1944
Wooden keepsake box from a Sinti family
Object | Accession Number: 2005.453.3

Small wooden jewelry box kept by Rita Prigmore and originally owned by her grandmother, Josefine Winterstein. The family was Sinti. They had traveled widely in Western and Central Europe until the Nazi regime restricted Sinti migrations in the 1930s. Rita's parents, Theresia Winterstein and Gabriel Reinhardt, met in 1941 when they both worked at the Stadttheater in Wurzburg, Germany. Persecution of the Roma was escalating. They were no longer allowed to work at the theater. Several members of Theresia's family were forced to agree to sterilization. Theresia and Gabriel decided to have a child, and Rita and her twin sister, Rolanda, were born in 1943. The infants were taken from their parents by Nazi eugenicists and used in medical experiments. Only Rita survived and was returned to her parents in 1944 by the German Red Cross.
Date received: approximately 1946
https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn517653

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of Rita Prigmore
No restrictions on access
No restrictions on use

1945
Small milk can with lid used by a Sinti family
Object | Accession Number: 2005.453.1 a-b

Milk can used by Theresia Winterstein Reinhardt and her family when they lived in a Sinti camp in Germany after World War II. The family had traveled widely until the Nazi regime restricted Sinti migrations in the 1930s. Theresia met Gabriel Reinhardt in 1941 when they both worked at the Stadttheater in Wurzburg. Persecution of the Sinti was escalating. They were no longer allowed to work at the theater. Several members of Theresia's family were forced to agree to sterilization. Theresia and Gabriel decided to have a child, and when Theresia was called in for sterilization she was 3 months pregnant with twins. The Germans permitted the pregnancy to continue and Rita and Rolanda were born in 1943. The infants were taken from their parents by Nazi eugenicists and used in medical experiments. Only Rita survived and was returned to her parents in 1944 by the German Red Cross.

Date use: 1945-1955

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of Rita Prigmore

1946
Hair comb worn by a German Sinti woman
Object | Accession Number: 1989.311.9

The hair comb belonged to an unnamed Sinti woman. The woman who owned this comb was a survivor of the Auschwitz concentration camp. The comb was safeguarded by her family while she was in the camps.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of Melanie Spitta

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Figure 48:
Oliver Lee, 20th May 1913, Llangollen

Endnote by Imogen Brightmoon

The Symbolic Language of Roma and Sinti Memory

Art, as a form of language, offers us a way to reflect on both an artist's vision, and an historical testament to a particular event from the perspective of visually translating that event and how it has been understood and interpreted before. In the case where the artist is a survivor of genocide, their 'keeping' or remembrance of visual memory, through their art, is all the more immediate and powerful, having the capacity to provide a therapeutic mirror, in the language of post-traumatic healing and interventions. They also act as a witness able to externalise, through their art inner images they experience as fractured 'flashbacks' in their own memories, or as injunctions from other survivors not to forget, either for themselves, or for posterity and the education of future generations. The artist and survivor is then both a living witness to war, someone who has lived through genocide, a keeper of 'lost' wisdom about those who died, and an interpreter of the past for those in the future.

What is the visual language of survival and how is it read?

During my archival image research for this learning resource, I have looked into the institutions where records are kept about the Roma and Sinti Genocide and Jewish Holocaust: including Roma and Sinti-dedicated archives, Jewish-dedicated archives, and archives that, whilst being led by Jewish archivists and historians, have a high number of Roma and Sinti artefacts of the inter-war (1919 to 1939) and post-war (1945 to the present) periods. These specific collections also included family archives, which are an important resource for representing those who have died, through their belongings, possessions and their portraits. Roma and Sinti culture in many communities respect the dead in ways that are similar to other communities in Wales (for example Muslim, Hindu, and Catholic Christians). Viewing images of the dead such as photographs, and portraits, has cultural significance in the ways we memorialise, commemorate and look after their spirits or souls, recalling the names of those who have gone, by those who are viewing the image.

Creating art related to commemoration and memorials provides a space for remembrance. Artwork is a 'space' that allows a way of expressing symbols as 'place-holders' of memories. A dedicated commemorative site, such as a war memorial can be explorative, vibrant and expressive; however sombre or melancholy, a strength of feeling can be given to the emotions we respond to this site with, similar to the Spanish notion of *El duende* as a passionate creative spirit-force. One can experience a personal response to grief without becoming immersed in the immediate process of grieving.

The symbols of honouring a living culture that has experienced trauma

The memorials and symbols of those survivors from Roma and Sinti families who were murdered in the Romani Genocide, have provided a moving and powerful bequest to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. These artefacts and personal items poignantly show the inherent artistry in the daily life of Roma and Sinti peoples during this period, and feature motifs that are synonymous with Romani tangible and intangible cultural heritage. These include coins made into jewellery, horseshoes and nails, floral *dikhlo* (a kerchief or headscarf worn by women or men), aprons, copper pots, violins, leather dancing shoes, a tortoise-shell hair comb. These artefacts are respected personal effects of those who have died, both memories and living archetypal symbols of the historical cultural tradition of the Roma and Sinti peoples, which provides contemporary Roma communities with a connection to their past and a basis for creative hope for the future.

Remembrance, memorial and the visual language of arts can provide us with a 'pathway' through the trauma of others. Sinti and Roma people are living testaments to survival ourselves; we are not separate from the artwork created about our survival or the collective deaths that have been inflicted upon our communities. Which space we choose to honour and focus upon becomes a personal statement; we remember, but we also cannot creatively thrive in an atmosphere of the trauma of death. We live in a place of comprehension, and look at life from another tenet: the worst has already happened. If we acknowledge this, then perhaps there is also 'space' and place to speak where we can say, the best is yet to come, where we can be hopeful in the face of history and be wise in the creation of memory and memorials.

British Romani Artist, January 2023